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Wednesday May 1 1996

Alex Dhabi D 8.50	Algeria L 2.20	Andorra F 1.00	Australia AS 2.20	Bahrain B 2.00	Belgium BF 2.00	Canada CA 1.00	Cyprus CE 1.00	Czech CR 1.00	Denmark DK 1.00	Deval D 8.50	Egypt EG 1.00	France FF 1.00	Germany DM 3.50	Greece G 3.50	Hong Kong HK 3.50	India IN 3.50	Indonesia ID 3.50	Italy I 1.00	Jordan JO 1.00	Korea KR 3.50	Kuwait KW 3.50	Latvia LV 1.00	Lebanon LB 3.50	Lithuania LT 1.00	Malaysia MY 3.50	Malta ML 1.00	Mexico MX 3.50	Netherlands G 4.00	Norway NR 1.00	Oman OR 1.00	Pakistan PK 3.50	Poland P 3.50	Portugal P 2.00	Qatar QA 3.50	Romania RO 3.50	Saudi Arabia R 1.00	Slovakia SK 3.50	Spain S 1.00	Sweden SK 1.00	Switzerland SF 3.50	Taiwan TW 3.50	Thailand B 3.50	Turkey TL 100.000	USA US\$ 2.00	Zimbabwe ZR 3.50
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# The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

46.541

Gary Younge on a storm in academia

## The race scientists

G2 with European weather

Francis Wheen on the Tory divorce rebels

## Till death us do part?

G2 page 5

Society

## Salford's urban oasis

G2 pages 10/11

# Shadowy Saudi group poised to be biggest shareholder in National Grid

Simon Beavis, Chris Barrie and Mark Milner

A SHADOWY Saudi Arabian investment group is expected to emerge as the largest shareholder in the National Grid after a series of complex share moves.

The Olayan group — an Athens-based investment company owned by the world's 15th richest man,

Suliman Saleh Olayan — looks poised to acquire 1400 million worth of shares in the company which runs Britain's electricity network after they were sold yesterday by the Hanson Group.

The shares were bought by James Capel, the broking arm of the HSBC bank, but the bank immediately entered into a special deal with Crescent Holdings, the German registered share buying vehi-

cle of the Olayan Group. James Capel insisted it was a derivatives deal designed simply to hedge the transaction against "market risk". But the view in the City and the electricity industry was that the Saudi group would acquire control of the 12.5 per cent stake — by far the biggest holding in the company. James Capel refused to detail the nature of the deal.

The threat of Saudi Arabian

investors emerging as the biggest shareholders in the Grid is likely to be a fresh embarrassment for the Government even though it retains a restrictive golden share in the company. It last faced a similar public interest dilemma when the Kuwait Investment Office bought a 22 per cent stake in British Petroleum in 1987. Ministers eventually forced the Kuwaitis to sell back the shares to BP.

Labour pounced on the Grid deal as evidence that the electricity industry was falling prey to speculation. Energy spokesman John Birt said it proved that "UK utilities have ceased to be part of a public service and instead are driven by international commodity speculation".

The Olayan dynasty is known to operate 30 businesses and financial enterprises in the Middle

East and throughout the world. Mr Olayan, aged 78, was a founding member of the Saudi-British Bank in Riyadh and holds senior board appointments at the Saudi oil group Saudi Aramco and the US bank CS First Boston. In 1987 he was awarded an honorary knighthood from the Queen and has been honoured by other European heads of state. He is said to be a member of the elite Knuck-

erbocker Club in New York and the Royal Automobile Club in London. His group was recently behind the purchase of a multi-million pound portfolio of property in Belgravia, London.

Hanson has been keen to sell off its Grid stake, which it acquired when it took control of the country's biggest regional electricity company, Eastern Group.

Eastern had appointed Ni-

ven Duncan, a former Olayan consultant and a director of its European arm, to its board just before the Hanson takeover. But yesterday Hanson insisted that Mr Duncan, who has since left the electricity company, had no involvement in the latest deal.

Hanson sold its Grid stake for 193p a share, a price widely seen in the City to be poor. Grid shares rose to 205p after the transaction.



Mourners in Lebanon carry a flag-draped coffin in the southern village of Qana yesterday, at a mass funeral for most of the 102 victims of Israel's artillery attack on a United Nations compound. PHOTOGRAPH: ALI MOHAMMED

# Tory MP faces debt deadline

Paul Murphy and David Hencke

JOHN Major's fragile one seat Parliamentary majority was under fresh pressure last night with the disclosure that a Tory backbencher, Roy Thomason, has been given a one month deadline to start repaying some of his £8 million debts or face the start of bankruptcy proceedings.

Secret minutes of a meeting held between a Tory party "fixer" and the National Westminster bank revealed that Mr Thomason, MP for Bromsgrove, has been unable to keep up an agreed £1,000 a month payment after the loss of all his consultancies.

The MP, whose nursing and property empire based in his former local government stronghold at Bourneborough has collapsed, had previously been kept afloat by a secret deal among the banks to accept minimal payments until at least the date of the next general election.

The minutes of a meeting on April 16 between NatWest's deputy chief executive, John Melbourn, and Sir Gerrard Neale, former Tory MP for Cornwall North, reveal increasing restlessness about Mr Thomason's failure to handle his debts, which include money owed to the Inland Revenue.

Also present at the meeting were representatives of Barclays, Royal Bank of Scotland,



Roy Thomason: business ventures folded

the finance house Lombard North Central, and UCB, the French bank, which has previously threatened to take legal action against Mr Thomason.

At the meeting Mr Melbourn simply stated that he "wished to see progress." But other bankers at the meeting expressed anger that no plan on repayment had been forthcoming, with several questioning whether Mr Thomason was "serious about dealing with the situation."

The minutes state: "GN (Sir Gerrard) to try and put forward proposal within one month."

More worryingly for those present was the absence of the Midland Bank, which has a direct charge over some of Mr Thomason's assets. Fears were expressed that the Mid-



land might take unilateral action which could trigger bankruptcy proceedings.

Other creditors not present included Allied Irish Banks and Lloyds.

As group deputy chief executive at NatWest, Mr Melbourn acts as the bank's front-man in dealing with its biggest corporate customers.

A NatWest spokesman last night declined to comment on the bank's relationship with Mr Thomason.

The MP's plight has been made worse by the loss of his consultancy with Dyson Bell Martin, solicitors and part-

nersary agents, who provided him with office accommodation and subsidised office services. He has also lost his consultancy with the West Bromwich Building Society, leaving him surviving on his £33,000 parliamentary salary and his office allowances.

Mr Thomason has previously tried to save some of his empire by buying back some of the property from the receivers with loans from NatWest and handed them over to a business run by his sons.

The former leader of Bourneborough council built up a property empire by buying up shops on the outskirts of the town and a shopping centre in Bovington. He also set up a nursing home business. But both ventures became overstretched.

Tory whips, who helped to mount the rescue package for Mr Thomason last year, are likely to try to defer bank action for as long as possible. Even if proceedings begin in a month's time, it could take six months before Mr Thomason could be forced to resign his Commons seat. Even then the Conservatives could delay the by-election for a further three months.

Mr Thomason has a majority of 13,702 at Bromsgrove.

# Anger as Hogg fails in beef talks

Cull plan crumbles under hard line from ministers in Brussels

Stephen Bates in Luxembourg

DOUGLAS Hogg, the Agriculture Secretary, last night failed to win a date for lifting European Union's ban on British beef.

After two days of negotiations at the agriculture ministers' council he was told by his 14 fellow ministers to come up with additional measures to eradicate BSE from British herds before there can be any concessions.

Mr Hogg said the Government had achieved "movement in the right direction". But he added: "There is a lot more negotiating to be done, but we have broken through by a combination of science, logic and tough talking."

The minister arrived here on Monday offering a selective slaughter programme to cull 42,000 high risk cattle to help eradicate mad cow disease — but only in exchange for clear signals that the ban will be lifted.

Last night there were reports of John Major's anger at lack of movement. One agriculture minister said progress had been delayed because of telephone calls between Mr Hogg and London, and the British delegation was once more given a hard time in the Council of Ministers.

Earlier British Government warnings that its proposals were only conditional on securing a lifting of the ban, or even that it would start regulatory measures, disappeared in the face of combined resistance from the 14 other member states to offer anything other than the minor eye-saving formula that Britain had

made a start in tackling the problem.

Mr Hogg offered as proof that the ban was soon to be lifted the hope that the European veterinary experts' committee might next week recommend the lifting of the ban on beef byproducts such as gelatine, tallow and semen. But other ministers immediately dismissed that hope as unrealistic.

The meeting's concluding document stated: "The council... has considered the UK concept as being a first step in the right direction. The council has, however, noted the case for strengthening the programme, through addi-

# Mongolia's army of rainmakers fights enemy fire with snow

Tim Radford Science Editor

THINGS looked bleak in Ulan Bator. Fires that have devastated Mongolia's forests and pastures were advancing on the capital. So yesterday the authorities struck back.

Within 20 minutes, the day was saved. Under the direction of meteorologists, Mongolian artillery fired scores of shells that exploded in the clouds, triggered a six-inch snowfall and claimed a famous victory.

"The fire spread to about 20 miles from Ulan Bator in the night, but the snow put it out," said Badarch, the mayor of Ulan Bator, a popular tourist destination 25 miles from Ulan Bator.

Three weeks of fires have killed at least 15 people and destroyed 20 million acres of forest and pastureland, causing up to £1 billion of damage to the fragile economy, officials say.

The Mongolian military probably used a technique with a touch of witchcraft:

silver bullets. A cumulonimbus cloud can hold 500,000 tons of water, but in droplets a thousand times smaller than a rain drop. The trick is to make them coalesce.

Scientists in Australia, Israel, the United States and Russia have tried various techniques to turn clouds into rain. They have hurled frozen carbon dioxide and silver iodide to give the droplets something to "seed" around. But no one has ever been sure whether hi-tech rainmaking was any more effective than the old shaman methods.

The Meteorological Office in Bracknell yesterday had its doubts. "Whether the shock waves managed to click something that caused it to snow, or whether, had they hung on for another 20 minutes, it would have snowed anyway, we will never know," a spokesman said.

Even if it works, the technique has its downside. "If you make it rain where you are, that means somewhere further down the line won't get it."

**Inside**  
Ferry operator P&O admitted passenger numbers on the Dover-Calais route had dived by a fifth and blamed Eurotunnel.

**Britain**  
As the impact of communism on rural China wanes, people are returning to old beliefs and ancient rituals.

**World News**  
NatWest warned its 48,000-strong workforce that it risks losing business to rivals because it makes too many mistakes.

**City**  
Four Keating's advisers must have been aware seeing the madness of the New Year after the TV election. Also: Transport.

**Sport**  
Comment and Letters 8  
Obituaries 10  
G2  
Crossword 15  
Weather 16  
Radio 16, TV 16

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Sketch

To scowl and not be a villain



Simon Hoggart

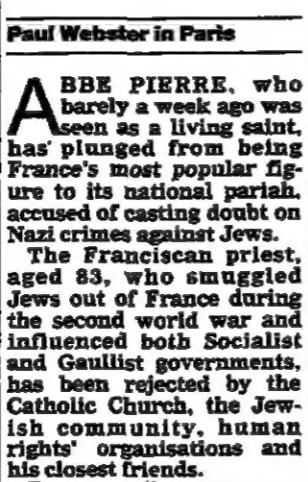
THE Lion King sat in his seat, scowling. That scowl is Mr Heseltine's plotting face. Actually, he resembles wicked uncle Scar more than the king himself...

once again, Conservative MPs should seek to change the Prime Minister, while denying the country the chance to change the Government...



Abbe Pierre, aged 83: defended Roger Garaudy, whose book casts doubt on the Holocaust

France's 'living saint' falls from grace



Paul Webster in Paris

ABBE PIERRE, who barely a week ago was seen as a living saint, has plunged from being France's most popular figure...



Bernard Kouchner (left)

'Of course, I know you haven't read the book but then what are you talking about? This confession, in my view, is the worst sin you have ever committed.'

He denied accusations of anti-Semitism and called for debate on the accuracy of Holocaust research. The defence changed embarrassed reaction into a fury of condemnation...

Defensive PM attacks crime leak

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

JOHN Major was yesterday thrown on to the defensive in the face of the disclosure that the crime rate is rising remorselessly again.

instead disputed the detail of the figures, insisting that the increases had only taken place in four out of the last six months for which there were official figures.

Recorded crimes: July 1995 to February 1996

Table with 4 columns: Month, Offences, Change compared with 1994-1995, and percentage change.

Right warned by Heseltine

Michael White Political Editor

MICHAEL Heseltine again rode to John Major's rescue last night when he squashed predictions of another looming Tory leadership crisis...

determined to stir up trouble if tomorrow's defeat in the town halls is worse than the expected 500-plus.

First night

Frieze frames vivid premières

Andrew Clements

Celan has fascinated Birtwistle for some years; he first set one of his poems in 1988 before he began work on his Covent Garden opera Gawain, and he has returned to them repeatedly since...

There are occasional echoes of earlier works but there is also a long cycle of songs and string quartet pieces that Birtwistle has called Pulse Shadows.

It was business as normal, says Cantona case accused

Vivek Chaudhary

MATTHEW Simmons, the Crystal Palace fan who was the target of Eric Cantona's kung fu kick, claimed yesterday that he was merely on his way to the toilet when he was attacked...

just shouting 'Off, off, off and pointing towards the dressing room.' Simmons, of Thornton Heath, Surrey, denies using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour...

his seat to hurl racial abuse at Cantona as he made his way off the pitch. James Mulligan, a Manchester United fan from London who was sitting in the same stand as Simmons...



Matthew Simmons... was just shouting 'off, off, off'

Police hold 17 over tickets

Owen Bowcott

DETECTIVES from Scotland Yard's football intelligence unit arrested 17 people in London yesterday in raids on ticket agencies offering executive hospitality deals for next month's FA Cup Final and the Euro 96 tournament.

outlets other than the approved Euro 96 agency, Synchro Systems. Among the companies visited by police was the National Sporting Club, founded in 1881...

Advertisement for Calais ferries. Text: 'Cruise around the clock to Calais... RELAX and just cruise across from Dover to Calais - the shortest sea route to France.' Includes an image of a ferry.

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, with text like 'Carry a Doctor' and 'A full piece of cake'.

Most were a bit manic, but the men of verse fared well compared with playwrights



Novelists Evelyn Waugh (left) and Scott Fitzgerald (centre), and playwright Tennessee Williams are awarded top ratings for disturbed behaviour

Poets 'least mad of the literati'

Psychiatrist's study gives the lie to Lord Byron

Chris Mihill Medical Correspondent

IT IS a myth that all poets are mad — the real sufferers of mental instability are to be found among novelists and playwrights, a psychiatrist says today.

Felix Post argues that contrary to popular belief, and the famous saying of Lord Byron, poets live relatively stable lives, although there are famous examples of mental instability and their problems are greater than those of the general population.

Poets tend to be more prone to mood swings but in general they have escaped other forms of mental illness and seem to have more ordered lives than novelists or playwrights.

Dr Post has drawn up a psychopathology "league table" of 100 famous American and British novelists, poets and playwrights, ranking them according to events such as alcoholism, marriage failure or suicide, and by psychiatric traits such as manic depression.

"A suspicion that — con-

How sane are the great writers?

Table with 7 columns (0-6) and 7 rows (Poets, Poets also prose writers, Poets also play writers, Prose writers, Prose writers also poets, Play writers, Play and prose writers). Lists authors like R.S. Bridges, A.E. Housman, A. Tennyson, E. Pound, H.H. Crane, etc.

trary to Lord Byron's dictum, all poets are mad, — poets might be somewhat more stable, hardened into an impression when no traits of personality disorder were found in 14 per cent of poets, as against 7 per cent of novelists and only 4 per cent of playwrights," he says.

Dr Post puts forward a theory that instead of genius being caused by "madness," it is the intense

mental effort required for verbal creativity of the highest order that cause changes in the neural pathways of the brain.

In the ranking of Dr Post's psychiatric league table — which contains a scale of zero to six, with zero being the sanest — the most disturbed writers include the American poet John Berryman (1914-72) and Hart Crane (1899-1932), both of whom committed

suicide. Others scoring a six for extreme behaviour are Scott Fitzgerald, Evelyn Waugh, William Faulkner and Tennessee Williams.

Those scoring a zero, for the sanest behaviour, include the poets Robert Bridges, William Bryant, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Sidney Lanier.

Robert Lowell, who suffered bouts of manic illness and heavy drinking. They share the ranking with Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, Eugene O'Neill and Edgar Allan Poe.

Oscar Wilde rates a three, WB Yeats a two, and George Orwell a one. Ezra Pound, TS Eliot and WH Auden all manage a four. Dr Post published a previous study in 1994, which looked at the psychiatric

characteristics of 300 famously gifted men, covering writers, composers, painters, scientists, politicians and philosophers. He concluded that writers were the most disturbed, so he decided to extend his study to see if mental illness was related to specific forms of writing.

In his latest study, published in the British Journal of Psychiatry, he says that only 31 per cent of the poets in his group suffered from alcoholism, compared with 54 per cent of the playwrights.

Forty-three per cent of the poets died over the age of 74, as against only 24 per cent of the novelists and 38 per cent of the playwrights. The playwrights had a 71 per cent rate of broken or problematic marriages, compared with 54 per cent of the novelists and only 26 per cent of the poets.

In terms of mental illness such as manic depression, severe depression and mood swings, none of the groups fared well, but 80 per cent of poets had symptoms compared with 87 per cent of playwrights.

He concludes: "Against expectation, poets were somewhat less burdened than writers of prose fiction, by personality deviance, psycho-sexual and marital problems."

Dr Post did not look at female writers, or living authors.

Mandela faces turmoil

David Beresford in Johannesburg

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela's difficulties in controlling an increasingly turbulent South Africa were highlighted yesterday when a one-day strike turned ugly, with an attack on a leading MP.

Strikers took to the streets against politicians whom they accuse of trying to ensure inequality in the post-apartheid constitution.

"The issue we are fighting is a serious attempt by the National Party, by the Democratic Party and by ... big business in South Africa to entrench inequality, to entrench the consequences of colonialism," Zwelinzima Vavi, the deputy leader of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) told thousands of workers marching through Johannesburg.

Tony Leon, the leader of the Democratic Party and a vocal critic of the government, was punched in the face as he ran the gauntlet of trade union

demonstrators outside the parliament in Cape Town. He had just collected a memorandum from Cosatu's secretary-general, Sam Shilows, protesting against opposition attempts to enshrine employers' rights to a "lock-out" in the constitution.

In Pretoria, the deputy leader of the Democratic Party, William Mntshini, had to be whisked to safety by police and marshals when a crowd shouted threats to kill him.

The incidents are embarrassing for President Mandela and the African National Congress, who have been caught in a dilemma by the strike. The ANC last week backed the protest, anxious to align themselves with their Cosatu allies. They were wrong-footed by the dramatic collapse of the rand at the end of the week, the strike being seen as a contributory factor.

The government was reported to have faxed its embassies at the weekend, urging them to circulate word before the financial markets reopened that the strike was unlikely to take place. Although

the currency steadied on Monday morning, that seemed a result of the Reserve Bank hiking up interest rates.

Cosatu's insistence on holding the strike at a time of economic crisis has left the impression that the Mandela administration is unable to control its own constituency.

Support for the strike was uneven yesterday. The main mining company, Anglo American, said about 15 per cent of their workers stayed away. Durban business reported about 50 per cent support for the strike. The car industry in the Eastern Cape was effectively shut down while, in the Cape Town area, the stayaway had little apparent impact.

Cosatu strike organisers said between 40 and 70 per cent of workers in some key industries had downed tools. President Mandela's Truth Commission suffered a serious blow at the hands of the supreme court, which ordered it to open its confidential files to security force personnel accused of atrocities during the apartheid era.

P&O admits Chunnel blow

Ian King

FERRY operator P & O yesterday admitted passenger numbers on the Dover-Calais route had dived by almost a fifth over the past year and blamed Eurotunnel.

Passenger numbers on the route slipped from 1.9 million in the first three months of 1995 to just under 1.6 million in the same period this year. The number of cars using the service fell by almost a quarter, from 380,391 to 292,780.

The company insisted the falls had been predictable. "As expected, P & O's carryings continued to fall as Eurotunnel's Le Shuttle service approached its natural share of the market," it said.

"During the period, Le Shuttle increased its tourist vehicle market share from approximately 20 per cent to 40 per cent. It has stayed around this level for the first three months of 1996."

P & O also highlighted figures suggesting that its share of the lucrative freight market on the Dover-Calais run

had been far less severely hit. But Eurotunnel, which last week announced pre-tax losses for 1995 of £295 million — one of the worst results in corporate history — responded gleefully to P & O's figures, saying the tide was still running in its favour.

Eurotunnel's co-chairman Sir Alastair Morton — who last week promised the ferry operators "more grief" — said: "We know people like the service that we offer, and today's news further underscores customer preference for Le Shuttle."

Eurotunnel is shortly expected to announce further price cuts, prompting another price war. Already, Stena Sealink, the Swedish-owned ferry operator, has announced price cuts on its duty free side this month to compete with Eurotunnel, whose range includes cigarettes at £1 a pack.

P & O yesterday denied reports that it is planning to merge its cross-Channel operations with Stena, which has also seen its market share dent by Le Shuttle. However, the group is expected to

send a dossier to the Office of Fair Trading over the next few weeks, highlighting how badly it has been hit by Eurotunnel.

P & O wants the Government to scrap undertakings it gave three years ago not to merge with rivals like Stena. It will argue that the undertakings, demanded to preserve competition and to help Eurotunnel establish itself, have been rendered pointless by Eurotunnel's successful entry to the market.

P & O's corporate affairs director, Peter Smith, said: "We have always been unhappy about the undertakings, and regard them as unhelpful. We are looking for medium-term consolidation among the ferry operators — something will come inevitably."

Stena also denied the talk, but it is known that Stena's managing director, Gareth Cooper, is thought to have called in a presentation last week to MPs for a change in cross-Channel competition rules.

Notesbook, page 11

If this is really the best the House can offer, God preserve us from its worst. Swarms of non-sequiturs flapped and buzzed through the chamber as self-righteous politicians boasted of their unswerving commitment to the sanctity of marriage.

Francis Wheen Q2 page 5

Hogg fails to get European beef ban lifted

continued from page 1 tional measures particularly targeted on herds where a significant number of cases of BSE had been detected.

It warned that only when the unspecified extra measures are put in place, together with those already announced, and following surveillance from the European Commission, could a

step-by-step lifting of the ban be contemplated.

A report by member states' chief veterinary officers, was even more uncompromising, calling for a more extensive culling of cattle than the extra £2,000 offered by the British last week, estimated to reduce the incidence of the disease by 15 to 30 per cent. The report demanded more de-

tailed measures, improved supervision, better identification of animals at risk of the disease, and more extensive controls over animal movements within Britain.

The shadow agriculture minister, Gavin Strang, said the Government's failure to secure any significant progress was a "serious setback".



New issue OUT NOW! "Would Sid approve? Who f\*\*\*ing cares?"



It's like punk never happened. This month in Q, a world exclusive interview with all four furiously foul-mouthed Sex Pistols on the eve of their Filthy Lucre comeback tour. "If we really can't get on, then that's it. Bye-bye."

PLUS! Life as an axe-murdering mayhem merchant with Pete Townshend, life after Kurt Cobain with Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl, and life at the bottom with U2, Pulp, Genesis, Def Leppard, The Cure and Suede.

AND! Joan Osborne, Beastie Boys, Orbital, Hootie & The Blowfish, Shed Seven, Terrorvision, Spike Milligan.

ALSO! In the world's only polyunsaturated reviews section: George Michael, Elvis Presley, Soundgarden, Elvis Costello, Manic Street Preachers, Lightning Seeds.



Out now!

News in brief

'Road rage' killer jailed for four years

A MOTORIST who ran over and killed a man as he lay injured following a hit-and-run accident was jailed for four years yesterday after being convicted of manslaughter.

Leeds crown court was told Paul Conlon, aged 28, from Leeds, killed Wayne Margrave in a fit of "road rage". Nadine Woolford, who was cradling Mr Margrave in the road, was seriously injured in the incident and Conlon was sentenced to 18 months to run concurrently, for causing her grievous bodily harm. He was also disqualified from driving for 12 years. He was acquitted of murder and grievous bodily harm with intent.

Mr Margrave had been injured by a hit-and-run driver, the court heard, and as Miss Woolford cradled his head, Conlon, furious at traffic delays caused by the accident, forced his way through the jam. When other drivers remonstrated with him, he drove back and ran over the couple, crushing Mr Margrave to death.

Funfair attack girl dies

A 13-YEAR-OLD girl died yesterday after receiving serious head injuries when she was attacked near a funfair at around 8pm on Monday.

A post mortem examination was due to be carried out last night on Louise Allen, from Corby, Northamptonshire, whom police believe was attacked in a fight near the funfair. Two 13-year-old girls have been arrested and are helping police with inquiries.

The fair was due to be closed last night to allow police to make inquiries in the area.

Children hurt in bus crash

FIFTY children were treated in hospital for shock and minor injuries yesterday after two packed double-deck buses collided on a regular school run in heavy rain.

Pupils from Boston Spa comprehensive school, West Yorkshire, were thrown into the aisles of their 76-seater school bus when it shunted into the rear of an ordinary service bus to Wetherby, which was also full. More than 100 children were involved in the 8.30am crash on Tenter Bridge, over the A1 Great North Road, north-east of Leeds.

Police are examining the vehicles after unconfirmed reports that the brakes on the school bus had either locked on the wet road or failed. — Martin Watkinson

Baby deaths prompt ban

THE Department of Health yesterday banned hospitals from using wooden spatulas as makeshift splints for premature babies, after two babies died and a third had part of an arm amputated due to fungal infection contracted from the equipment.

The infections occurred at the Birmingham Women's Healthcare Trust, where the spatulas, usually used as tongue depressors, were being used to keep the arms of babies still while tubes were inserted. A fourth baby was infected but recovered, only to die later of complications of prematurity.

A micro-organism called *rhizopus microsporus*, which was traced to the spatulas, damages blood vessels, blocking the blood supply around the body. A Department of Health spokesman said that following the cases the Medicines Division, which controls the safety of NHS equipment, had told all hospitals not to use the depressors as splints. The hospital said plastic spatulas were now being used instead. — Chris Mill

'Tougher' tests for pupils

NATIONAL reading and science tests for seven and 11-year-olds will be tougher than last year, the Government's curriculum advisers revealed yesterday. Calculators are also to be banned in some maths papers.

The £27 million national curriculum testing programme involving 1.8 million pupils in England would also give teachers and parents more detailed information, said Nick Tate, chief executive of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Next week 14-year-olds start key stage 3 tests in English, maths and science and 11-year-olds will sit their tests the following week. Teacher assessment and testing of seven-year-olds has started and will run to the end of May. — Donald MacLeod

BBC 5 Live is national station of the year as Virgin pips 'saviour' Evans in Sony awards



Radio 5 Live controller Jenny Abramsky with presenter John Inverdale, whose Nationwide show won the Sony news and current affairs award. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SULLIVAN

'Radio Bloke' seals BBC day of triumph

Andrew Cull Media Correspondent

RADIO 5 Live, the BBC's news and sports network, was yesterday named national station of the year at the Sony radio awards, the industry's equivalent of the Oscars.

The two-year-old station beat off competition from the rejuvenated Radio 1, and took five other awards on a day of triumph for BBC radio.

The only surprise was the defeat of Chris Evans, hailed as Radio 1's saviour, in the music-based breakfast programme category by Virgin Radio's Russ and Jonjo.

The triumph was hailed by controller Jenny Abramsky, who said: "We now have a station which is both fun and of the highest quality, reporting to the whole of the UK."

The station's awards included two for coverage of last year's Ryder Cup golf which was otherwise available only on satellite TV.

Michael Green, acting managing director of BBC Network Radio, said the awards reflected "the great strength in depth of what we do".

Sony radio awards '96

- UK station of the year: Radio 5 Live
- UK broadcaster of the year: Chris Evans (Radio 1)
- Breakfast show (music): Russ and Jonjo (Virgin Radio)
- Breakfast show (speech): Europe Today (BBC World Service)
- News and current affairs: Inverdale Nationwide (Radio 5 Live)
- News presentation: The Breakfast Programme (Radio 5 Live)
- Radio journalist: Jon Silverman (Radio 4)
- Sports programme: Ryder Cup coverage (Radio 5 Live)
- Music presenter: Brian Kay (Radio 2)
- Gold award: Richard Baker (Classic FM)

The judges said: "The excellent team of sports presenters deliver clear, exciting and informed broadcasting, so engaging that it makes listeners feel they are actually there at the event itself."

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Tough going as stations fail to find listeners

Andrew Cull on radio newcomers

MORE than 800 of the great and good in broadcasting gathered at London's Grosvenor House hotel yesterday to tuck into mousses d'avocat en salade and aigillettes de canard limousine.

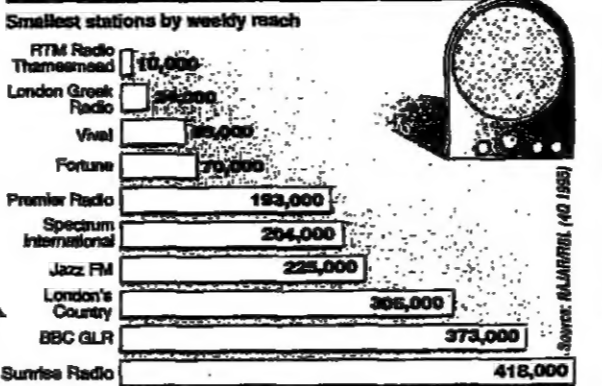
For nearly four hours they applauded the cream of the radio industry as they collected their rewards in the 1996 Sony radio awards.

But another side of the industry was not reflected at the glamorous ceremony: the increasing number of beleaguered stations, saddled with financial problems as they struggle to stay on the airwaves.

For many stations — launched on a tide of optimistic hype — the struggle is simply one of getting their voices heard above the cacophony on the overcrowded radio dial.

At 9.30am, the women-only station launched nine months ago by public relations guru

Struggling to be heard



Lynne Franks, the mood is one of crisis. Instead of a target audience of 400,000, it is attracting only 59,000 listeners a week.

At times at weekends the audience is so small that RAJAR, the radio research body, is unable to measure it. The dashes on the half-hourly audience charts

The station, owned by Golden Rose Communications, is to relaunch when it has worked out how to boost its signal.

David Heron, managing director of Premier, London's Christian radio service, has had to cut staff from 62 to 26 but said the station was breaking even on monthly running costs of £100,000.

Premier had 193,000 listeners a week in the final quarter of last year — only 2 per cent of the available audience within the M25 listening area. Mr Heron said he hoped for 300,000 by the end of the year and 500,000 in the longer term.

Talk Radio UK, losing up to £1 million a month, has yet to break through the 2 million audience barrier.

Michael Green, acting managing director of BBC Network Radio, said it was becoming harder to win a place in the market. "Any newcomer will need deep pockets to invest in talent

and a programme proposition that stands out."

In six years the number of local commercial stations has increased from 90 to 174 and a further 32 licences are in the pipeline.

Tony Stoller, the Radio Authority's chief executive, denied that the market was being saturated. The authority had a statutory duty to advertise frequencies where enough demand existed, but it took time for new formats to be established.

"Each one of the commercial giants had trouble establishing itself," he said. "This is a lively, competitive industry and there will be an occasional failure."

Douglas McArthur, managing director of the Radio Advertising Bureau, said commercial radio was enjoying a healthy performance, with revenue growing by 23 per cent in 1995. "Lots of people still want to launch stations, but the new entrants have found it tougher than expected."

Overseas voluntary worker fails Lilley's 'benefit tourist' test

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

A VOLUNTARY worker who spent 19 months in Tanzania cannot claim social security benefits after failing a government residence test to curb "benefit tourism".

The Benefits Agency has told Jennifer Semahimbo, who was working for Voluntary Overseas, must re-establish her habitual residence in Britain despite the fact that she kept her mortgage home in Birmingham while she was in Tanzania.

The agency said that three months is "likely to be sufficient" for her to re-establish residence.

"I thought there must have been some mistake when they asked me for an interview and told me to bring my passport," said Mrs Semahimbo, the first VSO worker to fail the test.

Mrs Semahimbo, who married a Tanzanian during her VSO work, knew nothing of the test introduced while she was abroad.

"I was shocked to discover it was a problem. I feel I am being penalised for marrying a foreign national and helping others. What has happened to the spirit of volunteerism that this government claims to foster?"

The residence test was brought in by Peter Lilley, Social Security Secretary, in 1994 to deter foreign nationals, particularly young Europeans, coming to Britain to claim benefits. Figures released by the DSS this week show that 14,032 Europeans have failed the test, as have



Jennifer and Juma Semahimbo: 'Penalised for marrying a foreigner and helping others' PHOTOGRAPH: STUART HARRISON

9,738 British citizens. Mrs Semahimbo, 43, a qualified social worker, gave up her £19,000-a-year job as a court welfare officer to go to Tanzania to work with women's groups on a fixed-term contract. While there, she was paid an allowance of about £25 a week.

She returned to Britain to marry her husband Juma and help convince immigration authorities that their marriage was genuine. The couple then went back to Tanzania for Mrs Semahimbo to finish her contract.

The decision on Mrs Semahimbo's residence test says a

Tanzanian tax clearance certificate stamped on her passport indicates residence in that country "rather than something more temporary".

She says it has been standard practice for volunteers in Tanzania to get tax clearance stamps to speed their departure from the country. VSO confirms this.

The case has alarmed VSO. Other returning volunteers have been subjected to the residence test. The charity which has 1,900 volunteers overseas at any one time, has asked the Government's Overseas Development Administration to intervene. A spokeswoman for the ODA, which provides £19 million annual funding for VSO, said yesterday that officials were "in contact" with the DSS about the case.

The Semahimbos have been living on £48.25 weekly unemployment benefit to which Mrs Semahimbo is entitled thanks to National Insurance contributions maintained for her by VSO. Mrs Semahimbo hopes today to start three weeks' temporary work, but her 36-year-old husband, an electrician, has not found employment.

A Dutch mother yesterday won a High Court battle for benefits which could help other European Union nationals making similar claims.

Mery Wolke, 24, unemployed, has a three-year-old boy and wants to remain in Britain to maintain contact with the father, from whom she is separated.

Last year she received a Home Office letter saying she had become "a burden on the state." But Mr Justice Poplewell said she was entitled to the money.

“God forgive me, God forgive me,” Zarbibi was screaming, as though she were somehow to blame and not the men who laid the mine; or those who designed and sold it to them. Yet although I felt wretchedly helpless, I didn't feel we were wrong to be there.

John Simpson

G2 page 4

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July 10 1996

Nick Davies on an operation to recruit a Jamaican 'supergrass' which uncovered more than police wanted to know

# Yard's Yardie is too hot to handle

## West Indian's life of crime in UK and Jamaica hushed up by Home Office



Eaton Green, left, seen in a security video, has been an embarrassment to his handlers, even though he led to the conviction of Rohan 'Bumpy' Thomas, right, and another man for holding up 150 people at a party

**A**N UNDERCOVER police operation to procure a new supergrass has blown up in Scotland Yard's face, leading to accusations that officers are failing to act on allegations of serious crime including murder. The operation is the latest twist in the saga of Eaton Green, aged 28, a "Yardie" (Jamaican gangster) gunman who caused a minor scandal last year when it was disclosed that for more than two years he had been a paid informant for Scotland Yard and that his handlers had allowed him to bring known Yardies into the country. Green's cover was blown when he was put on trial for an armed robbery in Nottingham. At a retrial, he gave evidence for the prosecution, as a result of which, last October, two Yardies received long prison sentences and Green was jailed for six years. The Guardian has learned that Green was taken from prison last November to a

Metropolitan police safe house, where he agreed to become a supergrass, providing a detailed confession of his life of crime. But he disclosed information which was so embarrassing that, according to senior sources in the Home Office, it has been suppressed. The sources say Green has confessed to at least 10 murders in Jamaica, some of them allegedly ordered by leading politicians. He also told police he had lied under oath, which could lead to the release of dangerous gunmen convicted on his evidence. Green confessed to a series of violent crimes in the United Kingdom during the two years when he was a Scotland Yard informer. There is evidence that his police handlers knew about some of his London crimes and that — in a breach of Home Office rules — they protected him when other London detectives wanted to charge him. Previously, Green denied under oath that he committed crimes while an informer.

In his statement Green has named senior figures who still hold power in Kingston. But the Home Office sources say that, months later, the Yard has neither made any outside inquiry into his confessions of murder, nor for level corruption, they will lose the assistance of Jamaican police, who have been supplying them with valuable intelligence on the Yardies. They also allegedly fear that if they disclose Green's confessions to murder, they

who wanted to keep their informer on the streets. Home Office guidelines forbid this. It is understood that Green has admitted that he routinely used a firearm, committed armed robberies, bought and sold large quantities of crack cocaine, and ran protection rackets in south London where he and his "crew" extorted money from black businesses. He was never prosecuted for any of these offences, and was finally brought to book only when he committed the armed robbery in Nottingham where his handlers were unable to protect him. At the end of the Leicester trial, on Green's evidence, Ro-

han "Bumpy" Thomas was jailed for 14 years and Steven Crossdale for eight years. They were convicted of using guns to hold up 150 people at a "blues" party. Thomas was also said to have tried to pull a gun on detectives who arrested him. Both have appealed against their convictions. So far, Scotland Yard has not informed the two men's lawyers of Green's effective confession of perjury. An investigation by the Guardian and World In Action found last year that in an attempt to protect Green, Scotland Yard officers had shielded him from arrest by Nottingham police, failed to pass on vital intelligence and tampered with documents. Officers had then tried to mislead the court and to abort the trial, even at the risk of allowing the other Yardies to go free. Behind the scenes, last year's furore over Green produced a row between Scotland Yard and immigration offi-

cers, who had allowed Green to stay in the United Kingdom and permitted his Yardie associates to enter the UK unimpeded. Two immigration officers have lost their jobs in the wake of the affair. Brian Fotheringham, a specialist on Yardies, has been transferred to other duties. His superior, Robert Saltan, is in the process of taking early retirement, officially on health grounds. The two men have been blamed for the rule-bending surrounding Green, but their colleagues complain that they have been treated unjustly. Home Office sources, too, believe that the rule-bending occurred only because Green's police handlers, who were evidently working without the supervision of senior Scotland Yard officers, insisted that it should. Scotland Yard said last week that it had not conducted a disciplinary inquiry into its officers' handling of Green. His principal handler, PC Steve Barker, is still at

Scotland Yard in the intelligence section dealing with Yardies. A Yard spokesman said last week: "As far as we're concerned, we've done nothing wrong. There is no need to conduct a disciplinary inquiry, because no one has made a complaint." It is understood that Eaton Green continues to serve his sentence in a safe house, where he is under 24-hour armed guard and where he has spent months producing his confession and living in some comfort, with a television and occasional visits from a girlfriend. Home Office sources say that Scotland Yard hoped to trade Green and his information with law enforcement agencies in the United States, and that officials in the US embassy in London have been briefed about his confession. What the Yard did not foresee was that Green would embarrass them as much as the Yardie gangs they wanted to expose.

**Green has confessed to at least 10 murders in Jamaica, some of them allegedly ordered by leading politicians. He also told police he had lied under oath, which could lead to the release of dangerous gunmen convicted on his evidence**

warded details to the Crown Prosecution Service, Interpol or the Jamaican authorities. Officers are said to be worried that if the truth about their informant's alleged murderous history comes out, the Yard will look foolish for employing a professional killer without checking his past. They are also said to fear that if they embarrass the Jamaican authorities by presenting them with evidence of high-

level corruption, they will lose the assistance of Jamaican police, who have been supplying them with valuable intelligence on the Yardies. They also allegedly fear that if they disclose Green's confessions to murder, they

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## Mowlam formula for Irish talks

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

**M**O MOWLAM, the shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, yesterday urged the Government to separate talks on decommissioning of terrorist weapons from the main all-party talks on Northern Ireland. She said a parallel process held the best chance of the talks not breaking down. Her call, similar to one on Monday by Dick Spring, the Irish foreign minister, put her at odds with Tory backbench opinion and presaged her determination to speak her mind more often on Northern Ireland in the run-up to the election. Ms Mowlam's call for parallel talks was balanced with a



Labour's Mo Mowlam... at odds with backbench Tories

warning to Martin McGuinness, the Sinn Fein leader, that he was mistaken if he thought a Labour government would act as the "7th Cavalry" for the republican para-

militaries by softening demands on the IRA to restore the ceasefire. In her clearest statement yet, Ms Mowlam said Labour supported Sinn Fein being allowed to join the all-party talks scheduled for June 10, as long as they win seats in the May 30 elections and restore the ceasefire of August 1994. "There are no other preconditions. If they restate the unequivocal ceasefire of August 1994, they should be allowed into talks," she said. She added that it should not be necessary for Sinn Fein to agree to the six Mitchell principles on non-violence before being allowed into June's talks — arguing instead that this commitment should be required at the start of the talks. She then broke with Tory

backbenchers and sided with Dublin by calling for decommissioning to be put into a separate, parallel talks process. Mr Spring made a similar call in a speech in Limerick on Monday, but Ms Mowlam said she had come to her position independently and denied it was intended to avoid the issue of decommissioning. "I am suggesting a process by which the decommissioning issue is addressed without handicapping progress on other issues, including trust and confidence-building." Some Unionists have said they will not talk face-to-face with Sinn Fein on June 10 until it at least signs up to the six Mitchell principles. But Ms Mowlam urged all political parties to meet in the same room on June 10 to discuss those principles.

## Detective soothed bomber's family

David Shearrock and Duncan Campbell

**T**HE family of the IRA bomber who blew himself up on a London bus were comforted by a senior Scotland Yard officer, their priest revealed yesterday. The unnamed inspector from the anti-terrorist branch spent 45 minutes with Edward O'Brien's parents at their home in Gorey, Co Wexford, Father Walter Forde told Irish radio yesterday. Father Forde, who denounced the IRA for involv-

ing the 21-year-old man in its England bombing campaign, said: "There was an inspector from Scotland Yard came over to deliver Ed's effects and the family had said to me that they would like me to be there. "He was a lovely man who was really sympathising with them. He wanted to deliver stuff personally rather than post it. They were a few small sort of effects." The items are understood to have included a crucifix given to O'Brien by his mother. O'Brien died when a bomb he was carrying ex-

ploded on a bus in Aldwych on February 18, a week after the Canary Wharf bomb ended the IRA ceasefire. His parents never suspected he was an IRA member. They issued a statement extending their sympathy to the eight people injured in the blast. Their demand that the IRA stay away from their son's funeral was ignored. Father Forde said that Miley and Margo O'Brien "were actually touched by the fact that he [the inspector] would come." He said the O'Brien family had

been buoyed up by thousands of sympathetic letters from England. A Scotland Yard spokesman last night confirmed that an officer from the anti-terrorist branch had returned O'Brien's personal effects and had spoken to the parents. It is not uncommon for anti-terrorist branch officers to meet the families of IRA men who were unaware of their sons' activities. "We don't hold any grudge — it's the old biblical saying of the sins of the fathers," said a police source.

## Ministers 'turn deaf ear' to ideas on care in the community

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

**M**INISTERS were yesterday accused of turning a deaf ear to ideas which could help prevent more care-in-the-community tragedies. The criticism came from an inquiry team which investigated the killing of Jonathan Newby, a 22-year-old volunteer left in sole charge of an Oxford hostel for people with severe mental illness. The team, which reported

last summer, called on the Government to set national standards for the care of such patients. After some difficulty, it secured a meeting to press its case with John Bowis, junior health minister responsible for mental health policy. Nicola Davies, QC, the team's leader, said yesterday: "It would be fair to say that we met with a less than positive response." The team was now seeking to have included a crucifix given to O'Brien by his mother. O'Brien died when a bomb he was carrying ex-

ploded on a bus in Aldwych on February 18, a week after the Canary Wharf bomb ended the IRA ceasefire. His parents never suspected he was an IRA member. They issued a statement extending their sympathy to the eight people injured in the blast. Their demand that the IRA stay away from their son's funeral was ignored. Father Forde said that Miley and Margo O'Brien "were actually touched by the fact that he [the inspector] would come." He said the O'Brien family had

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# Mystics and messiahs flood Water Margin

As the impact of communism on rural China wanes, people are returning to old beliefs and ancient rituals, Andrew Higgins writes. Peasant prophet and convicted rapist Wu Yangming was quick to leap into the ideological vacuum

IN THE mud-and-brick Chinese villages where 12th century outlaws inspired legends of a Chinese Robin Hood and their 20th century heirs brought the Communist Party to power, doomsday came earlier than planned. It arrived with a bullet in the back of the neck at the Bengbu municipal execution ground. There, four years before the end-of-millennium apocalypse promised to a multitude of followers, ended the extraordinary epic of Wu Yangming, peasant prophet, would-be Holy Emperor, convicted rapist and self-declared reincarnation of Jesus Christ. Aged 51 at the time of his death, the former peasant from Red Star Village led what officials now describe as the biggest network of "counter-revolutionary hoodlums" seen in China since Mao Zedong, another former "bandit", established himself as emperor of a new People's Republic in 1949. Mindful of its own past triumphs, the Communist Party has always seen peasants as a far more potent threat than students shouting half-digested democratic slogans imported from the West in Tiananmen Square. Deng Xiaoping's reforms have aggravated such fears.

The peasants, warns a celebrated tract, Looking at China through a Third Eye, have become a "living volcano". It adds: "If this vast army of ignorant, aimless and extremely destructive peasants is ever organised into an anti-government force, the government in power effectively will have already collapsed without any hope whatsoever of redemption." What unnerves Beijing about Wu and dozens of other would-be messiahs is that

and cult officers were known by titles like Master Mother, Golden Mother and Rose Mother. A code of discipline banned tight clothes, make-up, television, fruit, snacks and meals of more than two dishes. The only permitted drink was boiled water. Converts were expected to contribute at least 10 per cent of their possessions and money. The Three-Self Patriotic Church, the officially sanctioned guardian of protestantism in China, condemned the cult as heretical. An official

ment from society, the weakening of its structures in the countryside," said Robin Munro, Hong Kong head of Asia Watch and editor of a study of Chinese sects. Traditional forms of organisation have rushed in to fill the vacuum. The bedrock of Wu's cult lay in a swath of towns and villages stretching from northern Anhui into neighbouring Jiangsu and Shandong, a region plagued by floods - most recently in 1991 - and corrupt officials. A

Guangdong, adjoining Hong Kong. Wu found religion through the Shooters, a banned sect which regards a Taiwanese-American preacher as the Living Christ. Jailed for a year in 1987, he set up his movement on his release. Communist ideology has given way to an eclectic brew of Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism and folk religion. One proscribed but rapidly growing sect, the Way of Unity, worships Buddha, Ancestor Lu the Cave Dweller, Jesus, Mohammed and the Immortal Old Man of the South Pole. Also in vogue across China is the folk mysticism found in ancient texts such as the I Ching, a fortune-telling treatise known in English as the Book of Changes. "The last few years have seen all the classic elements of an end-of-dynasty syndrome," said Geremie Barbe, an Australian scholar of contemporary China. "Every time China begins to fall apart, the Book of Changes becomes the focal point of popular anxiety."



## 'Every time China begins to fall apart, the Book of Changes, the I Ching, becomes the focus of anxiety'

they might nurture the beginnings of such an organisation. According to religious groups in Hong Kong, China's official church, and the state-run media, Wu recruited converts throughout the country to a bizarre millenarian sect built around the biblical promise of a Second Coming. He was to lead followers through an apocalypse - scheduled for the year 2000 - to a new earthly heaven. He established a rigid hierarchy with himself as Holy Father, assisted by 16 lieutenants, most of them women. Real names were forbidden

report gives details of women, some as young as 14, being promised salvation in return for sex. When police raided Wu's rural hideout late last year, they found him in bed with three disciples. In both his message and organisation, though, he mimicked Mao's early Communist Party, as well as older insurrectionary movements such as the 19th century Taiping, whose leader Hong Xiuquan claimed to be Jesus's younger brother. "Popular religion is a by-product of the Communist Party's increasing disengage-

provincial campaign against graft three years ago implicated 300,000 cadres. The classic Ming Dynasty novel The Water Margin depicted the region as a lawless land of righteous peasant rebellion. Mao's Communist Party turned it into an early stronghold. In the villages around Bengbu, the town in Anhui where Wu was tried on 19 counts of rape and executed earlier this year, the sect had 11 cells. While rooted in the countryside, it also attracted converts from Shanghai and the southern province of

was an alien import from Russia. Its methods, he said, were as old as Chinese secret societies. Today, Chinese law bans all groups and sects outside five established religions. "These are not religious organisations but are, in fact, similar to doomsday cults that have existed in the United States, Japan and other countries," China's state council said recently in a lengthy response to Western accusations of human rights abuses. Foreign campaigners argue, however, that China's blanket ban blurs the boundary between criminal and legitimate groups. "The more repressed, the more radicalised they become," said Mr Munro. "Chinese history is strewn with groups like this fighting back. The Taiping almost brought down the dynasty."

## Extra security after gunman's life threatened

Christopher Zinn in Canberra

THE death toll in the Tasmanian massacre rose by one to 35 yesterday as police put the suspected killer Martin Bryant under extra guard in a Hobart hospital after threats to kill him were received. While Australians prepared to observe a minute's silence today, it was still not known what prompted the lone gunman to run amok in Port Arthur on Sunday afternoon. Police said there had been telephone threats against Mr Bryant, aged 28, and there were plans to move him from the Royal Hobart to a prison hospital. He is suffering from burns sustained when he fled a burning cottage at the end of the police siege. The hospital said that four of those injured in the shooting were still in a serious state, nine were stable, and five had been discharged. Mr Bryant, who has been described by neighbours as a loner, has so far been charged with one count of murder at a bedside court. At Port Arthur, forensic scientists discovered a third body in the ruins in the guest house where Mr Bryant held more than 200 police at bay. It is believed to be that of the third hostage taken. The police say they have accounted for all of the missing. They released the names of 24 of the dead who have been formally identified. Most come from Australia but two were Malaysian tourists. In Canberra, the opening of the federal parliament was overshadowed by the sense of national devastation. The governor-general, the Queen's representative, spoke of the profound sympathy of everyone in parliament for those affected by the tragedy. Today the prime minister, John Howard, and national leaders gathered in Hobart for a memorial service and a minute's silence. One man who was wounded in the drama spoke to reporters from his hospital bed. Peter Crosswell was in the Broad Arrow Cafe with two

friends when the gunman walked calmly in and proceeded to shoot everyone in the room with a high-powered military rifle. He described how the killer methodically shot down tables after tables and then about without a word, finishing off survivors. Mr Crosswell, who was lying still over his two companions, said: "I could only see two other people alive, everyone else had horrific head wounds and was obviously dead." He broke down as he said he had no idea why the gunman had not come back to kill him. The Tasmanian police and public safety minister, Peter Beaswick, announced plans to ban all military-style semi-automatic guns. He said Tas-

'Everyone had horrific head wounds and was obviously dead'

mania, which is reputed to have the slackest gun laws of the six states, would tighten legislation irrespective of the decisions made by the emergency meeting of state and federal police ministers next week. The New South Wales premier, Bob Carr, has called on the federal government to take over all gun laws from the states and institute a national buy-back campaign to reduce firearm numbers. Tasmania's director of public prosecutions has warned the state's media against printing photographs of the accused man and details of his background. Damien Bugg QC said the publication in most Australian newspapers of the man's picture, alongside headlines such as "This is the man" and "Face of a killer", could prejudice a fair trial. He said contempt proceedings against the media in Tasmania were possible, because the identity of the killer would be central to any trial.



Writing on the wall... A cyclist rides past a message to accused killer Martin Bryant sprayed on the Hobart hospital where he is being held. Capital punishment was last carried out in Australia in 1967

## Instability revives Mobutu's fortunes

Chris McGreal reports from Kinshasa on the Zairean dictator's partial return to favour

PRESIDENT Mobutu Sese Seko was sneaked through a side gate of the Elysee palace to meet Jacques Chirac in Paris last week. But however shy France may have been about admitting it, Zaire's dictator emerged from the meeting keen to let it be known that he is once again in favour in at least one European capital. After years of ostracism abroad and vilification at home, the future looks brighter for Mr Mobutu than at any time since he was pressured into ending one-party rule. Zaire's economy and what passes for government continue to crumble. But Mr Mobutu has exploited the incompetence of his opponents at home, and the competing interests of the major powers abroad, to win a degree of rehabilitation in the West and emerge as the favoured candidate for the presidential election which Zaire's nearly dysfunctional parliament has set for May 1997. Five years ago France and other Western donors halted aid to Zaire in frustration at President Mobutu's lack of commitment even to accountable, if not democratic, government. The loss of aid, combined with rising anarchy and a reign of terror by the military, sent the already declining economy into tailspin and increased the political pressure on him. In 1993 parliament convicted him of high treason as he battled with the government of the then prime minister and opposition leader, Etienne Tshisekedi. But he proved adept at denying power to others, if not entirely retaining control for himself. Exploiting some politicians' desire for money rather than power, he laced parliament with spoilers and used the military to keep alive fear and chaos on the streets. Then he sacked Mr Tshisekedi and cajoled parliament into confirming the dismissal. While Mr Tshisekedi continues to call himself prime minister, his office has been occupied for the past two years by one of Mr Mobutu's allies. Kengo wa Dondo was appointed because he poses little threat to the dictator. His failure to implement promised financial reforms and restore the rule of law have reinforced public disillusionment with politicians of all breed. "The parliament decided that all important questions must be solved by consensus," Mr Kengo said. "But this is a means of blocking the normal function of the government and reform. They do not want anything to change." In the resulting vacuum, Mr Mobutu portrays himself as the one man who can hold the country together. "Our weary and disillusioned people no longer believe in the fine words and democratic promises of their politicians," he said in a New Year's speech. He has been helped by weariness in Paris and Washington, squabbling among opposition politicians, and the emergence of more pressing regional concerns, which have led the US and France to buy quietly into the idea of Mr Mobutu as a stabilising influence. France's preoccupation with the implications of its loss of influence in Rwanda, and wider concerns in the West about growing instability elsewhere in central Africa, have provided new props to Zaire's dictator. The flood of Rwandan refugees into Zaire proved a useful excuse for Mr Mobutu to call off a presidential election last year. But with the opposition once again fragmenting, Mr Mobutu promised in Paris that the vote would go ahead this time.

An ORNAMENT

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Dr Kohl's prescription

Germany's workers, the sick and pensioners will bear the brunt of the unbalanced austerity programme, reports Winfried Munster

# Dr Kohl's prescription for trouble

## Städtische Zeitung

**E**VEN the minister who runs the German chancellor's office called the austerity programme unveiled last week "a package of social cruelties".

The head of the IG-Metall steel union, Klaus Zwickel, said the measures amounted to "a conspiracy against employment and social issues".

In reality, the very German attention to detail has to provoke a smile. When the coalition began to put together its "programme for growth and employment" the plan was to prepare the country for the 21st century. By the time they got to the end of it, they were bogged down in minute details, such as whether spectacle frames should be paid for by the state.

Clearly, Helmut Kohl and his coalition government are proud of all the details on which they managed to agree. The coalition set out to achieve two aims: to shave DM50 billion (£22 billion) from central government and regional spending while reviving the economy to create jobs.

The government did come up with several intelligent answers. To support young entrepreneurs through tax relief is standard practice in

many countries. To relax working legislation for companies of up to 10 people instead of five sounds reasonable. Previously the easier dismissal legislation applied to companies employing five or fewer. Often young businesses overlooked an opportunity for growth rather than hire a sixth person, who would force it to abide by tougher employment laws. The risk of being squeezed out of the market while being unable to make people redundant was too high for many.

The coalition also emphasises the importance of "flexitime" to create employment. But this could mean not working for a long time during a recession, and companies may ask themselves how much their investment in job training will be worth.

In effect, the government will make most savings on the backs of those with least influence: employees, the sick and pensioners. It may appear acceptable to reduce a salary in the case of sickness, but those who are still off work after six weeks might find it difficult to live with a 10 per cent cut in sick pay. The economic sense of social security should be to help where individual efforts fail, but the government is planning the opposite.

The programme to save money lacks coherence. It is

obvious that the coalition partners did not find a concept and merely settled for everything on which they could agree. Some of what they agreed on is merely a projection, such as the reform of income tax. And even if there was a concept behind the saving programme, the goal of saving DM50 billion amounts to little, and the price that must be paid by those who have to rely on social security is too high. Fundamentally, the austerity programme is unbalanced because employers do not have to contribute.

New jobs could come from deregulation. Nowadays foreign investors do not waste much time in investigating the possibility of opening a factory in Germany. The incredibly complicated building regulations set to that. Foreigners who have followed the struggle to ease regulations on shopping hours will smile wearily.

It may be that the time has come for a new partnership between employees and employer, where employees become co-owners of the company and associate their well-being with its. They will then help management to find modern, lucrative and job-creating technology.

But it looks as if the employers do not yet know that now it is their turn to give.



Too many doctors... Kohl and his coalition are proud of what they have agreed, but the prescription lacks logic. CARTOON: E.M. LANGS/DEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

## Scams aided by secrecy

The benefit fraudster is not just a creature peculiar to Britain. Germans have ways to cheat the system. **Reymer Klüver** reports

**T**HE mayor of Pforzheim is so disenchanted with the way the social security system works locally that he has even written a book about it.

A Social Democrat, Joachim Becker is among Germans who complain that a system set up to help in emergencies is being wrecked. Not only are more and more people relying on it for longer periods, abuse has spiralled.

With a population of 118,000, Pforzheim is one of the smallest towns in Germany but has 70,000 industrial jobs — among the highest in Baden-Württemberg. But Mr Becker says 6 per cent

of the townsfolk live on social security.

Aged just 27, Birgit Seeger's anger runs deep. The social security inspector is tired of combating benefit scammers. Among the most common, she says, is that of the broken washing machine which her office has to replace instantly. Then there are the claimants who "lose" their wallet immediately after cashing their giro, once or twice a year. They have to be paid again.

Abuse of the system is facilitated by Germany's strict protection of personal information: authorities, health and insurance institutions cannot compare data. Young

mothers are easily able to claim large benefits by claiming that they raise their children alone, and the social security office is unable to prove that this is a lie.

From his sixth floor office, Mr Becker watches the flow to and from the social security office. Living off benefits, he says, has become "a way of life". The welfare system is in ruins partly because there are many people who "hack their brains to find more ways of extracting money". Increasingly, there is a mentality in Germany that "one should cheat the state", he says.

Recently the unemployed were invited to participate in a scheme whereby a firm would employ them at cheap rates and the state would subsidise their wages. Only half were prepared even to discuss the scheme.

From the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

## Unions plan May Day show of strength

GERMAN unions hope to bring hundreds of thousands of people on to the streets in May Day protests today to challenge Helmut Kohl's plan for sweeping welfare cuts.

Herbert Mai, head of the OeTV union representing public servants who face a two-year pay freeze, threatened strikes if Bonn pushed through a cut in sick pay.

"If employers insist on this, a labour dispute will become inevitable," he said.

Ursula Engelen-Kefer, deputy chairwoman of the DGB trade union federation, warned: "If employers think they can turn back the clock on pay policy and dismantle the welfare system, they will be responsible for the consequences." — Reuter.

## Mayor cheated to help poor

Madrid is counting the cost as officials who rigged farm subsidies in rural Spain are finally being brought to justice

### Adela Gooch in Madrid

**W**HEN Juan Ferrandiz first appeared before the judge, accused of defrauding millions from development funds for poor agricultural regions, he broke down and wept. As he left the court, farm workers who had benefited from the scheme cheered the former mayor as a hero.

Some consider the case the worst abuse of a subsidy system which is regarded as a byword for political and financial corruption.

The court is demanding the return of 1,000 million pesetas (£5.2 million) from Mr Ferrandiz and seven other accused. Mr Ferrandiz denies the charge, but admits making it possible for the people of his village near Granada to receive welfare payments without meeting the legal requirements.

Some see him as the victim of a system which was set up by the first Socialist government, after the death of Franco, to alleviate the hardship of agricultural workers in depressed regions, especially Andalusia in the south and Extremadura in the east.

The plan for rural employment (PER) which Spaniards say would be more accurately called the plan for rural unemployment — sets

aside funds for development projects to give people work and improve conditions in villages. Critics say the scheme rarely worked properly. To qualify for rural unemployment benefit, workers have to prove they have been employed for at least 40 days a year. Many municipal officials, like Mr Ferrandiz, have been accused of crediting villagers with days worked on PER-funded projects which were never actually begun, or in which far fewer than claimed were involved.

Mr Ferrandiz insists he acted "on humanitarian



power in Madrid after 13 years but still controls the regional administrations in Andalusia and Extremadura, has long been accused of turning a blind eye to PER scams — and even encouraging them — to win votes. Four years ago, however, faced by the need to reduce the budget deficit, the Socialists began to clamp down on welfare abuse.

So far most of those charged with PER fraud have received light sentences, but as a result of the trials mayors are realising that they have to apply the rules more strictly.

The days when families could claim agricultural unemployment benefit of around 60,000 pesetas a month each, without even trying to find work, are over.

Mr Ferrandiz's successor as mayor of Pinos Puente, a village some nine miles north of Granada, in the Vega valley, says that 1,700 people now claim benefit in the municip-

ality compared with 4,200 five years ago.

But the social problems remain. "There is a percentage of the population that is financially very weak; temporary workers who used to rely on occasional work which has largely disappeared as a result of new farming methods and competition from European Union and Moroccan imports.

The conservative Popular Party (PP), which won Spain's general election in March, has long accused the Socialists of setting up a system of hopeless dependency among these people. "I don't want Andalusia to be the land of subsidy fraud, lack of self-respect and no real future," says Javier Arenas, the Andalusian PP leader.

But there are doubts as to what the new government can do to change the situation. Since 1983, 1,000 billion pesetas have been invested in infrastructure in Andalusia, but unemployment at 33 per cent remains 10 per cent above the national average.

In the short term, policy is unlikely to change much, although the pressure for greater welfare cuts, so that Spain can meet EU single currency criteria, grows.

agricultural workers' fears that the PER would be eroded were mitigated, for the time being at least. The outgoing Socialist government, with the tacit approval of the new PP government, approved PER expenditure of 17,500 million pesetas for the coming year — the same as this year.

There was a lot of unemployment and enormous social problems I had to try to solve'

and that all the days credited were eventually worked. "The municipal area I was in charge of had 14,000 inhabitants and a 40 per cent unemployment rate. There were enormous social problems that I had to try to solve," he says.

## France's peace role deserves praise

### Comment

#### Le Monde

**F**RANCE'S persistence has earned her the right to a dominant position in the solution to the Lebanese crisis. With

Washington, Beirut and Damascus, France will be part of the "supervision group" overseeing the ceasefire that took effect on April 27. France must be congratulated.

Of course, the sceptics will say the United States played the main role and is the main guarantor. Lebanon and Israel are respecting the rules which the US laid down for this new military game. To some extent, we are dealing with a return to the status quo that prevailed before the not so glorious but extremely murderous and destructive Israeli operation.

The Americans have taken care to make no financial engagement for the reconstruction of the civilian infrastructures destroyed by the Israeli bombardments. Once again, the Europeans will have to financially support the Middle East.

It is here that the French intervention makes sense. On the whole, the Europeans have for many years

accused the US of being the sole mediator in the Middle East peace process, and of restricting them to a role of "peace bankers" while not letting them have any say.

The European Union was, in fact, in charge of the cheque book but only had an observer's seat at the negotiation table. It is, therefore, totally justifiable that France, which has been linked to Lebanon for such a long time, plays an important part in the peace process.

But France still has its limitations. It is only part of

the "supervision group" because Syria and Lebanon insisted on that.

France was not chosen by Israel, which has no confidence either in France or in Europe. This is the EU's problem in the Middle East. To be a mediator and have a proper place at the negotiation table with the superpowers as the US, you must be invited by both warring parties. Despite the positive role played by Paris in the most recent Lebanese drama, this is still not the case, either for France or the EU.

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Diary  
Matthew Norman

**S**POTTED hiding behind a curtain, at a paternalistic conference in London yesterday, was a figure of unwelcome spruceness. The wearer of a spotless three-piece tweed suit was Bob Geldof. He was there, he told organisers of "Men and their Children", because he felt passionately that fathers can bond with their offspring as well as mothers. It seems his lawyers have told him that, because of his gender, he has little chance of winning custody of his daughters — Peaches, Lily, and Trishelle, and Platyus Tookstool — when he is divorced from Mrs Oates, and he is furious. Whether a custody battle will ensue is unclear; if so, his appeal to the judge might be worth bearing. "Just give me the f---ing kids. I need the f---ing kids, so just give them to me now." Well, who knows? It worked for him once before.

**T**HE Diary sends regards to Brian Silcock, whose retirement as "operations editor" of the Sunday Times was met with the news that, due to "financial pressures", the company was unable to provide any champagne for his leaving do. Mr Silcock worked for the Sunday Times for 34 years.

**D**ESPITE the Guardian's report that he has been a little too cute with the crime figures, nothing seems likely to end the weight of the Sunday Times' campaign to become Tory leader, yet another puff ("Howard's way in front") appeared on Sunday. Since no one seriously rates his chances — Mr Howard is regarded, after all, as the world's most competent interior minister since Callaghan's horse became Consul — what on earth explains it? The answer, I gather, is Oswald, the white cotton handkerchief which has the role of mentor to MoS editor Jonathan Holborow. "It all began at a recent lunch," says MoS executive, wearily. "Howard had one of his colds, and was forced to borrow Oswald. The two got on famously (the handkerchief, named after Sir Oswald Nelsen, is firmly of the right), and now that Oswald's virtually taken over as editor..."

**I**N the wake of the collapse of its Arabic TV service, the BBC is striving to find work for those made redundant. Journalists are especially thrilled at a document pointing out vacancies in Hong Kong, with the Disney Channel.

**F**OR those awaiting the itinerary of Mandy Mandelson's Easter trip to the Far East — the £6,000 bill for air tickets and hotels was sweetly picked up by Barclays Bank — the news is disappointing. Details of the high-level business meetings, each strengthening trade links between Hartlepool and the Orient, have yet to arrive. But I'm sure it won't be long now.

**I**N the Daily Mail, sane and rational Paul Johnson addresses the imminent slaughter of cattle. "Cows are not just statistics," he writes. "They are God's creatures... In their own way they are beautiful. The colour of a fine Charolais is superb. The velvet texture of a prime Jersey makes one catch one's breath in wonder." Keen for more, we rang to ask his opinion of the yak. "I don't know anything about them," said Paul (as if this was a disqualifying condition). "And no, I know nothing about llamas either." Paul is moving away from meat, he says, and will soon be vegetarian. "As I get older, I am more and more overwhelmed by the wonder of life and God's creation. I'd never deliberately eat a lamb. Honestly, it will be saffron robes and chanting next" — and when I was swimming in the Caspian Sea once, I found a scorpion in my shoe, but I let it get away. And once I met a tarantula in my hotel room. I'd never kill a spider. I think spiders are wonderful."

**O**NE of history's longest conflicts ends on Saturday, when hostilities between Sweden and San Marino officially cease 350 years after they first went to war. Please God, never again.

**I**'M ONLY DOWING THIS TO MAKE MICHAEL HOWARD LOOK BAD.



# Beginning of the end of an era

## Commentary John Gray

**T**HE Tory end-game has begun. The rejection by John Major, during Chancellor Kohl's visit to Britain on Monday, of rightwing demands to rule out in advance Britain's joining a single European currency will be remembered as a defining moment in the undoing of Conservatism. The Prime Minister's remark that a majority of the electorate would vote against joining, in a referendum, is an admission that he is now hostage to his own party on this issue rather than an estimate of British public opinion. There are other signs that the Conservative Party is nearing the brink of a historic split: the leaked survey of members of the 92 Group of Tory rightwingers disclosing that up to 100 of them are preparing to fight the next general election on pledges to oppose a single European currency and institute a wide-ranging referendum on Britain's relations with the EU.

John Major's strategy of

bridging the divisions within his party on Europe has always been to hold to a policy of steadfast trimming and unalterable ambiguity. That strategy has already failed. The effect of Sir James Goldsmith's brilliantly executed political intervention can only be to accelerate a breakup of the Conservative coalition that is long overdue. Yet any split in the Tory party will be over much more than policy on Europe. It will be a parting of the ways between irreconcilably opposed kinds of rightwing thought and practice. It will signal unmistakably the end of anything resembling traditional Toryism. It will also mean the disintegration of the Tory political machine that has ruled Britain for three-quarters of the last 150 years.

Matters of political doctrine or history are far from the minds of Tory MPs at present. Electoral survival is the dominant concern, and sheer panic is the prevailing emotion. Those who are proposing to accept a manifesto do so in a last effort to save their seats. Many hope by the threat of rebellion force John Major and his Cabinet supporters to accept terms of the Eurosceptic manifesto. This is a gamble of desperation based on the slenderest of calculations. There is probably no one who imagines that

adopting radically Eurosceptic can now save off defeat. The Conservatives' objective is to preserve a majority can no longer avert becoming a full-scale catastrophe. They fear a cataclysmic wipe-out, following the Tories in 1906 after the minister Arthur Balfour failed to bridge their divide over Tariff Reform. At the same time many rightwingers welcome defeat as a reprieve from a party leadership which they despise and which they have since Mrs Thatcher supplanted in 1990. From that point the strategic interest of Tory right has favoured a hard defeat.

### It will mean the disintegration of the Tory machine that has ruled for three out of four of the last 150 years

The Tory right rejects the EU as a fetter on the sovereign nation-state. It is also committed to a minimum government which does nothing to impede the workings of the unfettered global market. Rightwingers such as John Redwood have not yet perceived that national sovereignty means little when the

economic policies of sovereign states can be vetoed by the free global movement of capital. Nor have they grasped that deregulated markets are potent solvents of traditional forms of social life. Last week's shabby manoeuvring over Lord Mackay's proposals to reform the law of divorce were merely early moves in the Tory succession struggle. They were also evidence that the right has yet to understand that choice and change cannot be promoted throughout the economy but bottled up in family life.

The remnants of the Tory left are less backward-looking. Their attachment to a Christian Democratic model of Europe contains no new thought on the problems facing European institutions. One-nation Tories have not yet engaged with the question of what the role of government should be in the wake of the demolition of the post-war settlement. They have not thought how to respond to effects of Thatcherism that are irreversible.

# Failures that led to the death of a family



Isabel Hilton

**I**T WAS one night in July 1985 that Susan Hearmon died, along with her two daughters, aged six and four. They were killed when their home was set ablaze by a man who had lived with them for six months as the children's baby-sitter. The family's home life was not ideal; the girls were born of different fathers to a mother who could scarcely look after them. But the immediate agent of their deaths was Darren Carr, a young man who was known to suffer a severe disorder and who had a history of actual violence and of murderous fantasy.

Known to whom? Known to various police forces who had arrested him, to the psychiatrist who had encountered him, to the social workers whose case he was, and to the Oxford Social Services whose caseload included Susan Hearmon and her daughters. They knew, too, that he was living with the family. They had been warned that this was a dangerous man and that the family was at risk. Yet they did not tell Susan Hearmon that the man who was looking after her children had attacked his own mother with a hammer, or that, following the voices in his head, he had taken to the streets of Reading one night with a kitchen knife.

Knowing all that, the social worker who belatedly visited the family after being alerted to Carr's history, and to the fact that one of the children had complained that he had attacked her, reported that he was "in control and totally caring as far as the children were concerned". Those children are now dead because Oxford Social Services behaved with a laxity and incompetence that defies belief, and because Carr fell into that bureaucratic safe haven — a grey area in the law. It is for Oxford Social Services to account for their failings. The social worker concerned has resigned after he was discovered to have failed to follow basic procedures. The grey area in the law that allowed Darren Carr his liberty long after he was recognised as a dangerous man persists. The question is: can it, or should it, be changed? It arises out of the distinction — a pretty technical one for Darren Carr's victims — between what psychiatrists, and therefore the law, regard as a mental illness, and those conditions they define as personality disorder. The phenomena that go towards a



# Brutal cost of the Bill

## Jane Deighton and Sadiq Khan, below, argue that recent record damages awarded against the Metropolitan Police are clear signals that the court won't tolerate flagrant miscarriages of justice

**I**N THE last three weeks juries have awarded record damages of £220,000, £108,000 and £302,000 against the Metropolitan Police Commissioner. They should not surprise us. Damages paid by the Commissioner for the unlawful acts of his officers have been rocketing over the past few years. He paid £393,000 in 1986 and £1,560,000 last year. And, let's face it, many of these "unlawful acts" are crimes to you and me. More of that later.

The surprise is that awards of this size have been so long in coming. The bulk of the awards are made up of exemplary damages. Exemplary damages punish the defendant and deter others from behaving in the same way. They have nothing to do with compensating the plaintiff. Exemplary damages send a message from the court. Take the case of Daniel Goswell and his wife. The defendant was well done and a rarity. PC Trigg was one of only 54 officers to be sacked in 1992 — out-

disciplined. If the police believed we were lying on oath we would expect to be prosecuted. What does the Commissioner think he is doing letting those officers go unpunished? The jury's message was until you take steps to deal with officers you believe are covering up for their mates, cover-ups will continue.

The Home Secretary reinstated PC Trigg. PC Trigg told the court last week that in the same circumstances he would do the same thing again. The jury's message to the Home Secretary was: you must account for putting officers like that back on the streets of London. The damages awarded include aggravated damages, in compensation for injury to feelings caused by the circumstances of the incident. In Daniel Goswell's case they reflect the way in which he was publicly humiliated. PC Trigg had the arrogance to trounce him in front of a crowd of onlookers. They also reflect the failure of the police to apologise to their victims. Daniel Goswell received not one word of apology from either PC Trigg or the Commissioner, even after the Commissioner had sacked PC Trigg.

Arrogance may be one of the keys to all this. If these exemplary damages pull the Home Secretary, the Commissioner and his officers down a peg or two, they will have served the purpose for which they were intended. If the Commissioner learns to treat his officers as if they were subject to the law like you or me, then perhaps they will cease to perpetrate these dreadful wrongs. If the Commissioner learns to treat us with common courtesy and apologise when his officers have done wrong, then perhaps we'll be less unhappy. Exemplary damages, being punishments, take into account the defendant's means. The Commissioner's budget this year is £1.6 billion. If he falls to come down a peg or two in the face of these awards he will need an even larger one in the future. Meanwhile civil actions against the police will and should continue.

A word about the complaints system. It almost worked in Daniel Goswell's case. However, in the end it didn't, and unfortunately failure is the norm. The vast majority of complaints result in no action being taken against the police officers concerned. This is because those complaints are investigated by the police themselves. Certainly complainants believe this is the reason.

Yes, there is a form of independent supervision, the Police Complaints Authority. However, it often appears to operate on the side of the police. Take for instance the PCA's attitude to complainants who wish both to complain about police behaviour and to sue the police. The PCA will advise them to sue with the hope of securing compensation. Many of those complainants are advised by solicitors like myself to pursue the civil action first so that they have the advantage of their complaint being investigated by lawyers on their behalf rather than by police officers on the Commissioner's.

In those circumstances more often than not the PCA will "disperse" with the complaint, citing the need for expedition as their rather curious justification. (In 1993 the PCA dispensed with 7,075 complaints, and refused to disperse with just 9. They do not release a breakdown of the reasons.) This produces the anomaly of court after court finding the Commissioner liable for the unlawful acts of police officers with no disciplinary or criminal proceedings being taken against those officers. The least the PCA could do is to insist that disciplinary proceedings follow such court decisions.

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# Finance Guardian

## NatWest to cut more jobs

### 'We make too many mistakes'

Patrick Donovan  
City Editor

NATWEST yesterday told staff that the bank makes "too many mistakes" and offers a service which "is no better than some competitors who charge less" as it unveils plans for a major efficiency drive which looks set to see the loss of thousands of jobs.

In internal documents being circulated to its 48,000 strong workforce, the bank took the highly unusual step of admitting that it risks losing market share to more efficient rivals.

It refused to speculate on how many jobs face the axe. But management and unions are in the process of negotiating measures to help out casualties which could include radical steps such as helping fund redundant staff to take degrees at university.

According to the policy document, Building a new Retail Bank, NatWest says urgent action is needed to restructure because "our customers are changing the way they bank". At the same time, the document warns that it faces increased competition from the likes of Abbey National, a merged Lloyds/TSB, together with Virgin, First Direct and Save and Prosper.

The bank needs to be turned around by a major rationalisation programme, which will include:

- Reducing the number of paper processing and administrative centres from 150 to just 50; and
- Shutting another 350 branches to leave a nationwide network of 1,750.

NatWest aims to concentrate on building up investment in 700 key branches as well as extending networks of cash dispensers and telephone banking services. The result will be that far more of its staff will work directly with customers.

### Notebook

## Caught napping? Install a cashpoint



Edited by Alex Brummer

BEHIND the headline figures of branch closures and lost jobs at Britain's biggest domestic bank, NatWest, is the fascinating admission that changes in the financial sector are undermining its competitive edge.

Greenbury called for simple, understandable annual reporting of how directed pension schemes had changed during the year. That has not been simple to achieve, despite the best efforts of the actuaries. The real problem is that in many companies the resulting figures are embarrassing.

## Lang devalues Euro currency

Larry Elliott and Richard Thomas

THE Government's hardening opposition to a single currency was underlined yesterday when the Trade Secretary, Ian Lang, joined forces with Bank of England Governor Eddie George in stressing that Britain could survive outside monetary union.

Mr Lang, speaking to the British-American Chambers of Commerce, said: "We have become too focused on the European issue at the expense of our place on the wider scene."



## Noddy ready to motor with new chums

Roger Cowe

THE latest adventure of the Famous Five, Noddy and their chums from the Enid Blyton stable got under way yesterday when the new owner of the prolific author's output revealed the first stage of its plan to outstrip them to worldwide brand stardom.



No more PC Plod... Noddy contemplates Disney-style stardom. PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEBSTER

Enid Blyton adventure twice a week when it goes on air next year, and another series is being produced for New Zealand TV.

but it continues a tradition begun by Ms Blyton before her death in 1968. Despite the innocence of her 1950s stories, and her insistence that the aim was to aid children's education, Blyton launched a collection of Noddy torches, toys and toddlers' clothes.

Sales have been about £1 million a year — a lot of ginger ale and ice cream for the Five, but it would not keep the modern executive in suits and champagne very long. "I would be most disappointed if we didn't improve on that fairly quickly," said Mr Wray.

## Colonial jumps mutual ship

Chris Jones

AUSTRALIAN insurance and financial services company Colonial Group yesterday became the latest mutual to opt for a stock market flotation.

Sun Alliance emerged as the favourite to take it over. Colonial members will be invited to vote on the flotation proposals at an extraordinary general meeting in November. The Group has not yet decided whether the flotation will take place on the UK or the Australian market.

### Ferry wars

ON the face of it, P&O's quarterly statistics yesterday were awful — with passengers on the Dover-Calais route down by almost a fifth.

Barclays also announced that it will continue — at least in the short term — as Eurotunnel edges closer to its natural market share.

### Pensions jackpot

FIRMS may grumble that the outcome of the long-running battle over disclosing directors' pensions will result in extra work, extra cost and confusion. But even if that is true, it is worth it — as with all the corporate governance improvements of the past few years which have exposed routine abuses.

A full merger between P&O and Stena is not the answer. But the National Association of Pension Funds said it was glad that companies will also have to disclose transfer values.

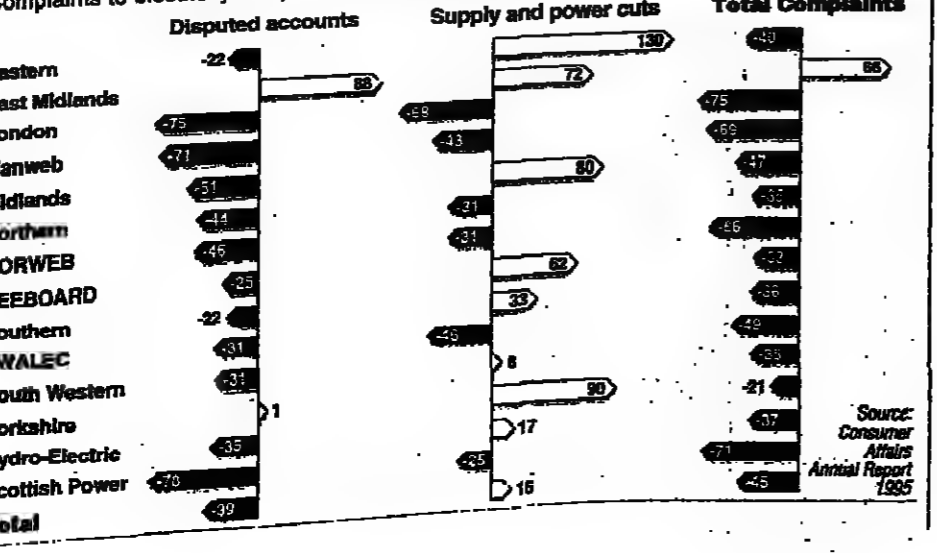
## Deal struck on top pensions

Roger Cowe

COMPANIES will be required to disclose two sets of figures for the value of directors' pensions under a compromise reached in the battle between companies and shareholders.

Companies will not have to disclose a transfer value if they provide enough detail for that to be worked out by a reader of the accounts.

### Blowing a fuse



## Watchdog warns PowerGen not to renege

Chris Barrie

THE electricity generator PowerGen was warned yesterday by the industry watchdog that it would face a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry if it reneged on undertakings to dispose of two power stations to Eastern Power, the regional electricity company owned by Hanson.

blocked its plans to buy Midlands Electricity. Prof Littlechild said more competition was needed and that it would be a "serious refusal" if PowerGen refused to comply with the sale.

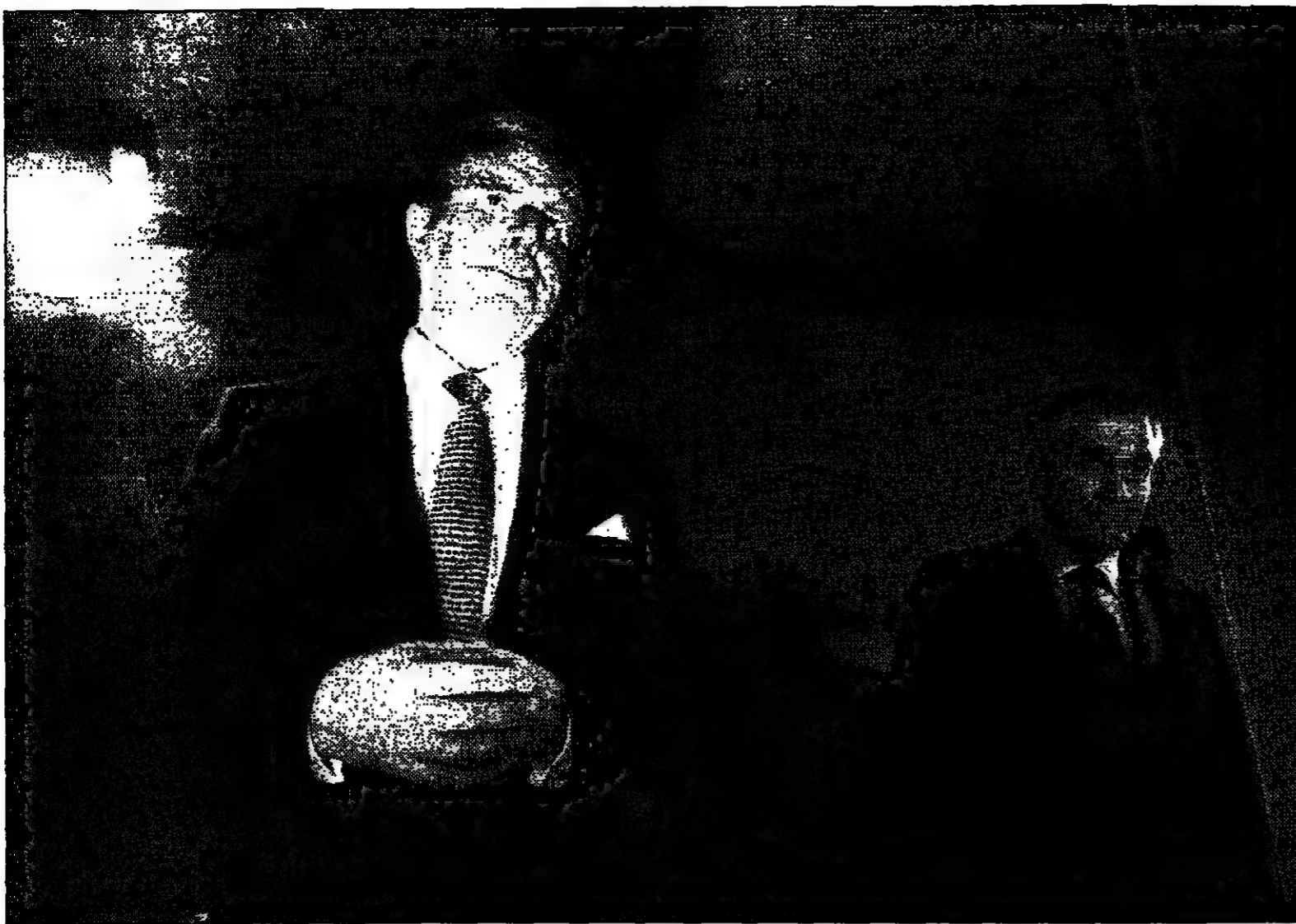
Prof Littlechild was speaking at the publication of the annual report of the Office of Electricity Regulation (Ofreg). The report revealed complaints by customers have fallen by half since privatisation.

TOURIST RATES — BANK BELLS

Australia 1.6578	France 7.50	Italy 2.310	Singapore 2.0675
Austria 15.7	Germany 2.275	Spain 16.5	South Africa 5.59
Belgium 45.73	Greece 358.00	Netherlands 2.4875	Spain 16.5
Canada 2.00	Hong Kong 11.48	New Zealand 2.1325	Sweden 10.06
Cyprus 0.80	India 51.58	Norway 9.65	Switzerland 1.975
Denmark 0.85	Ireland 0.8375	Portugal 229.25	Turkey 107.587
Finland 7.21	Israel 4.81	Saudi Arabia 5.63	USA 1.4725

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel)

Cedric Brown retires feeling a little hurt. Martyn Halsall reports



Stepping off the gas... Richard Giordano, chairman, in the background as chief executive Cedric Brown rounds on his critics. PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SMITH

# Scalded fat cat exits

**C**EDRIC Brown, the most vilified company director of recent years, yesterday retired as chief executive of British Gas admitting he had been hurt by the scalding acrimony over his £475,000 salary.

Industry's most prominent "fat cat" was combative to the end. He rounded on critical media questions after the company's annual meeting in Birmingham, and censured the Government for insufficient enthusiasm towards privatisation.

"I regret the Government didn't stand up and argue the case for privatisation," he said. "I think they let it drift and let it run away from them."

He denied that controversy over his salary "tarnished" privatisation. Declining further comment on his 75 per cent increase, which turned last year's annual meeting into a verbal battlefield, Mr Brown said of the job: "Undoubtedly some of it did hurt — if you are a human being, some of that is going to hurt."

But he robustly defended changes sweeping "the best gas company in the world" and claimed lapses in stan-

dards of service would be rectified. Figures published yesterday showed customer complaints rose 11 per cent in the first three months of 1996, to a record 15,898.

"Standards have fallen; there is no doubt about that," Mr Brown said. Change could not proceed without some difficulties.

Mr Brown, who entered the industry 43 years ago as a laboratory assistant, testing gas at Rotherham, plans to include fishing and more time with his family in a future financed by a £350,000 pension and a £121,000 one-year consultancy with British Gas.

He might also become an author, he hinted yesterday. "Before I start rambling on I'd better save something for my book," he said.

The meeting, with only 500 largely specific shareholders and without "Cedric" the overweight protest pig, contained few references to his finances. Richard Giordano, the chairman, drew some applause when he praised Mr Brown for his part in the company's development.

Tony Augarde, a 60-year-old Oxford artist, repeated his call of last year for the resignation of the entire board after a "catastrophic year"

for British Gas. "I am glad to see that Cedric Brown, although belatedly, has taken my advice," he said.

Other shareholders criticised government gas competition policy and Mr Giordano indicated his agreement. Competition, originally intended for completion by 2002, had been accelerated to 1998, threatening a crisis when potential oversupply was linked with a collapse in the spot price, he said.

"As long as such a huge proportion of the available gas is locked up at high prices, we look at the current market, the full benefits of

liberalisation will not be achieved," said Mr Giordano.

"The plain fact is that with the domestic market opening up to competition in the next two years, the current situation is unsustainable. It threatens the orderly transition to a fully competitive market."

Mr Giordano said "mutually acceptable changes" to gas contracts were being pursued with producers to achieve deals "that recognise current market realities".

He drew a contrast with deregulated markets overseas where solutions had been brokered "in an even-handed manner by regulatory authorities and governments".

He also threatened to take to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission the new pricing formula for transmitting gas if this failed to "strike an equitable balance" between the interests of shareholders and consumers.

## Parting thoughts

### On privatisation:

'I regret the Government didn't stand up and argue the case for privatisation. I think they let it drift and let it run away from them'

### On his critics:

'Undoubtedly some of it did hurt — if you are a human being, some of that is going to hurt'

### On customer service:

'Standards have fallen; there is no doubt about that'

## Dark Continent for stressed pilots

### Workface

Keith Harper

IT IS NOT all plain flying for airline pilots these days. They are worried about safety and stress and, with increasing competition among the world's airlines, face growing pressure from employers to adopt new working conditions.

Such feelings pervaded the pilots' international conference, which has just finished in Dublin. Lack of safety precautions, particularly in Third World countries, was alleged to be one reason for some recent serious air crashes.

Captain Rob McInnis, chairman of the International Federation of Airline Pilots, highlighted the problem of aircraft and crew being hired from a foreign source, questioning whether plane and personnel were "properly documented, maintained and qualified".

He said several countries had "notoriously liberal" rules governing their air transport industry and several areas of non-compliance with standards set by the International Civil Aviation Transport Organisation.

At grass roots level, IALPA's associations were under attack. In countries like Turkey it couldn't fulfil its role as the industry's "safety conscience" because it had been shut down by the authorities. IALPA had developed a safety oversight programme, but this relied on the co-operation of participating countries. He said that some foreign civil aviation authorities were incapable of meeting IALPA's standards.

Safety factors vary considerably in different parts of the world. Europeans are trying to protect working conditions, while Africans and South Americans are fighting

to secure for their pilots basic standards that colleagues in the West have accepted as the norm for years.

The hazards of flying were underlined during a secret session of IALPA, which designated "virtually the entire African continent" as having "critically deficient airspace".

For political reasons, IALPA is reluctant to draw attention to such criticism. Its local members have to co-exist with their own governments and pilots do not see it as their business to create scare stories to frighten the public from flying, particularly to holiday destinations.

But many pilots are wary of airspace over the African continent because they think that radar is inadequate and ground-to-air communication poor.

Even so, African pilots manage. In the conference bars, they defended the conditions they had to work under, saying that developing countries could not afford to install the kind of technical equipment used in other continents. One of them suggested that the larger air carriers which fly into Africa might contribute towards improvements.

A pilot from a West Indian island with close links to Britain described how his local organisation is involved in talks with his government in an effort to get landing lights installed at isolated airports. It gets dark very quickly after 5pm and if services are delayed, pilots have to land blind. "We have not had a serious accident yet but it is waiting to happen," he said.

Captain McInnis echoed this concern. He said many members were being deprived of their basic rights and that to break the influence of IALPA, pilots were being forced to sign individual contracts. The present accident rate is unsustainable, he argued, and he wants to make sure that efforts to improve it are now concentrated on the Third World.

## News in brief

### Press group merger nets Hollick £2.2m

LORD Hollick, chief executive of Daily Express publisher United News and Media, yesterday picked up £2.2 million as part of the company's recent merger with the MAI media and money broking group. The Labour peer received the payment after agreeing to waive his rights to options over MAI shares which he had previously been granted under the company's employee share ownership scheme.

MAI said Lord Hollick — who earns £558,000 a year — had waived his annual bonus payments every year since 1988, and the options were over shares bought on his behalf by the scheme's trustees with those bonuses. Lord Hollick's colleague Charles Gregson, now chief executive of money broking at the merged group, received just under £1.5 million as part of a similar arrangement.

The pair have converted other shares and share options in MAI into shares and options in United, under the same terms as the merger. Under the conversion, details of which were provided by United yesterday, Lord Hollick now has 306,717 United shares — worth £2.1 million at last night's closing price — and options over another 861,619 shares. The price at which the options can be exercised was not disclosed. — Ian King

### GA moves into Europe

GENERAL Accident, one of the big five composite insurers, yesterday began delivering promises of expansion in Europe when it bought two German insurance units owned by Union des Assurances de Paris (UAP) for \$51 million. Analysts said the purchase of general business UAP Allgemaine and life office UAP Leben was a sensible, if cautious move.

Deregulation in Germany will present many insurers with challenging market conditions. "This is an exciting and fast moving market place, with considerable strategic importance to us," said GA's group chief executive Bob Scott. Group general manager Russell Evans said the company was considering merging UAP Allgemaine. — Reuter

### Home-buying gets cheaper

THE cost of buying a home has fallen to its lowest level in almost 20 years, according to figures from TSB. The bank said in a report published yesterday that a combination of April's tax changes and low mortgage rates meant that affordability was likely to improve into the summer.

It said that a typical couple can expect to spend £13.80 of their take-home pay on each £100 of their mortgage. House price figures published later today by the Halifax and Nationwide are expected to record a 1 per cent increase on the month. — Cliff Jones

### Vulkan debt deal unlikely

BREMER Vulkan, Germany's largest shipbuilder which filed for protection from its creditors in February, said yesterday it did not believe a debt deal with creditors could be reached. The company said its management board had informed the Bremen district court that debt composition proceedings could not go ahead.

Under German law, failure of an insolvent company to arrange debt composition means that it must file for bankruptcy. The announcement had been widely expected after the company said in March that writedowns had wiped out the sprawling group's equity capital of DM1.4 billion. — Reuter

# Food industry sinks its teeth into beef alternatives

OUTLOOK/Companies bounce back after seeing £1.2bn wiped off market values in BSE crisis. TONY MAY reports

**T**HE food industry is catching its breath as the initial panic over BSE subsides. The industry will continue for the British farmer but food processing, distribution and marketing companies are regrouping and finding substitutes for beef. They are also seeking salvation in the growing trend of eating out.

The immediate impact of the beef crisis has been severe. The meat processing and manufacturing sector is predicted to lose 17 per cent of its output this year, while the food manufacturing industry as a whole will lose 4 per cent, according to the latest Business Forecast by Charterhouse, the investment banking group.

The report notes that even before the latest BSE scare, the consumer was switching away from red meat on health grounds and says that so far there has been no compensating growth in consumption of white meats, although pork is becoming more popular.

A month ago, with the panic at its height, the City wiped £1.2 billion off the stock market value of the companies thought to be most at risk.

Unigate, Northern Foods — the UK's biggest milk suppliers — Delgaty and Harrison's & Crossfield — suppliers of animal feedstuffs — all lost more than £150 million of their capitalisation. The biggest faller was Sims Food, a beef supplier, which lost 23 per cent of its value, while Devro, the sausage-skin company, lost 8 per cent and Whitchurch, a meat processor and distributor, fell 17 per cent.

The fall was an attempt by the market to anticipate the furthest extent of the food industry's problems and there has been a recovery by some of these companies since at least March 31. The group said yesterday that both its catering division and burger manufacturing businesses had suffered from the BSE crisis but both were recovering from the impact.

Barry Cox, the chairman,

said that 75 to 80 per cent of group turnover has historically been in chickens, pork and lamb and most of the supply of beef has been from imported sources. Only 8 per cent of its turnover was "burger related".

The group has been able to offer customers chicken, lamb and pork burgers, and has been rewarded by a significant increase in demand.

Mr Cox said beef sales were now showing a recovery, and some customers were switching back to British beef. The catering division had seen a resumption in demand for the better quality cuts of beef, but school caterers were still reluctant to buy it.

Charterhouse's survey concludes that while the beef crisis has had a dramatic short-term effect on the food market, its suppliers and customers, there is powerful growth in eating out and catering generally, and that this will have a bigger long-term influence on the UK food sector.

It may be of no comfort to the beef industry, but spending on eating out is expected to rise by 3.3 per cent a year in real terms by 2001 with pub food — which accounted for 16 per cent of eating out in 1995 — expected to grow by 8.5 per cent in the next five years.

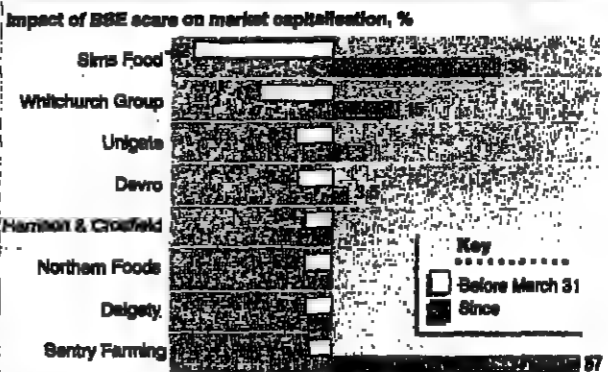
Despite the beef crisis, the food market as a whole is set to grow at 1.6 per cent a year until 2001, compared with the 0.5 per cent a year seen between 1990 and 1995.

So far this year, the shares of food producers have underperformed a booming stock market by 7 per cent.

shares rally by 15 per cent since March 31. The group said yesterday that both its catering division and burger manufacturing businesses had suffered from the BSE crisis but both were recovering from the impact.

Barry Cox, the chairman,

## Mixed fortunes



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Soccer

David Lacey finds the Newcastle United manager's outburst the understandable result of a tense title race, while a psychologist thinks his rant may yet benefit his football side

Why Keegan snapped in the final stretch

KEVIN KEEGAN, normally an equable sort of fellow, surely cannot be among those the gods would wish to destroy. Yet even his most devoted admirers, watching his performance on Sky television after Newcastle United's match at Leeds on Monday night, must have felt they were witnessing the madness of King Lear.

Wild-eyed and barely coherent, Keegan sounded like a man whose house had burned down with everything he cherished in it, not a football manager whose team had just won an important game. He could have simply stitched together a few clichés about the championship not being over yet, instead he launched into a tirade against Alex Ferguson, the manager of Manchester United, who remain favourites for the title despite seeing the six-point lead established by Sunday's 5-0 rout of Nottingham Forest halved by Newcastle's 1-0 victory.

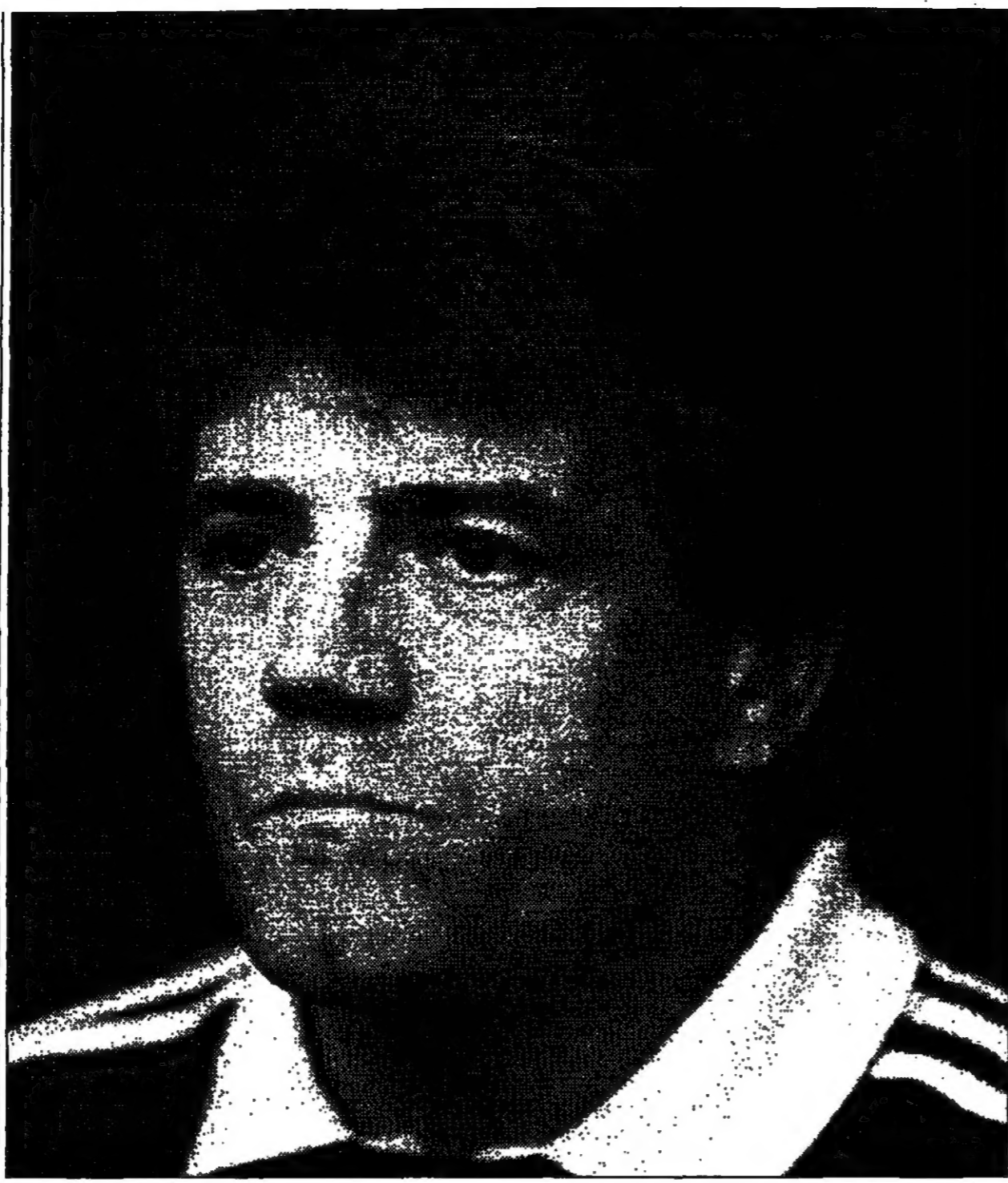
Twelve days earlier, after Ferguson had watched his team labour to beat Leeds United at Old Trafford, he criticised their players for not showing similar commitment against other sides. Ferguson, of course, knew full well what the media reaction to this would be, especially as Newcastle were Leeds's next opponents. In a way, then, Keegan was the last to fall for the bait, using words such as "slandering" and "slandering" saying that the Manchester United manager had gone down in his estimation, and demanding that Ferguson be sent a videotape of Monday's match to show him how out of order he was.

To which Ferguson might respond with a tape of Leeds's 3-0 Coca-Cola Cup final defeat by Aston Villa, and rest his case. As a result of all this, another army of psychologists, similar to that which pondered the state of mind of Eric Cantona when he lunged-kicked his way to infamy, has been mobilised to analyse Keegan's torporship into the sort of psychology who yesterday declared that Keegan was as emotional as Ferguson was passive cannot have been around when Alex has blown his top.

Surely both managers, having seen their teams beat Leeds with varying degrees of difficulty, have merely betrayed signs of PMT (post-match tribulation), a condition common among their kind at the climax of a campaign. Newcastle's distress at Leeds was understandable, for although his team's victory promised to take the championship the distance, it also threatened to prolong St James' Park's agony. Newcastle should win at Nottingham Forest tomorrow night and they may well beat Tottenham at home on Sunday, but if at the same time Manchester United defeat Middlesbrough at Riverside they will almost certainly take their third title in four seasons on goal difference.

At Elland Road, Sky caught Keegan in a moment of extreme frustration. The irony of seeing Keith Gillespie, who had been the human part of the £7 million transfer that took Andy Cole to Old Trafford, head the winner the day after Ferguson had dropped Cole for the first time clearly meant nothing compared with the chances missed to narrow the gap on goal difference. Yet if Newcastle, like Manchester United, beat Forest by a generous margin the contest will be back on in earnest. His international experience also extends to 53 England caps and a playing spell with Monaco. An ambitious man, Hoddle has coveted the England job ever since Venables decided to stand down. Hoddle's contract with Chelsea runs out in the summer. Although he has discussed a new deal with the club, an England offer was always going to take precedence.

There will be question marks over the future England involvement of Robson and Don Howe, with Hoddle wishing to bring in his own. These could include the Chelsea No. 2 Peter Shreeves, who has international experience with Wales, and Chelsea's coach Graham Rix, a former England international. Favourite to take over at Chelsea is the disgraced former Arsenal manager George Graham, who this summer ends his year-long ban from the game over the bung scandal. Others in the frame include Rix and Ruud Гулит.



Surface tension... the strain shows on Kevin Keegan's face as he watches his team defeat Leeds. PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN GILES

Stephen Smith on the managerial mind games

ANYONE watching Kevin Keegan on Sky TV on Monday night must have pondered over the mental pressures that the managers of Britain's top clubs are under. Was the pressure finally getting to one of the most likeable managers?

Most viewers would probably think they were watching the demise of a talented young manager breaking as Greg Norman did in the US Masters, under the unrelenting onslaught of a foe, Manchester United's Alex Ferguson, with all the mental strength of Nick Faldo.

Just like Norman, Newcastle had amassed a huge lead only to squander it and watch as the Manchester United reeled them in and then took the lead. With three holes to go, Norman cracked and saw his hopes sink in the lake at the 16th hole. Was Monday night Keegan's approach to his 10th hole? Will the ripples of his anger and frustration spread through his team with such a devastating effect? Watching as a psychologist, I think not. It might just have the exact opposite effect.

Ferguson has used reverse psychology on the players of Leeds and Nottingham Forest to try to galvanise them against Newcastle. In Leeds's case, he had taunted them. He wondered why clubs turned in their best performances only against poor little Manchester United. He tried to hurt their professional pride. To Ferguson, a man motivated by winning, this was simply his managerial duty.

"No!" This was not part of the game as he understood the rules.

Keegan's anger on Monday was palpable. There was so much he wanted to express but his brain moved quicker than his mouth could as he moved on to his next expression of anger before he had completed the last. To most onlookers his inability to complete his sentences would indicate that this was his anger and the ball was sinking beneath the surface. Only, to further the golf analogy, in this case a funny thing happens. The ball hits a stone, rebounds out of the lake and falls straight into the hole. It's a funny old game.

Ferguson's tactics could backfire on him. Manchester United's Alex Ferguson is up to and it has been irritating him like a festering sore. Monday's outburst may act as a cathartic now that he has got it off his chest he can focus coldly on Newcastle's remaining fixtures.

If Ferguson's comments were a calculated manoeuvre, it has met with only limited success and his bluff may have been called. It may well be that his outburst has lifted a huge weight from his shoulders; not what Ferguson anticipated. Newcastle's players now have a vital role. They must have noted the effect this has had on Alex Ferguson and honest manager. Perceived honesty is the key here. If the players feel Keegan has been unfairly treated by their common foe, their Goliath, it could be the best spur they have for greater motivation and team cohesiveness. Little Ferguson is on the 18th tee, looking back at the 17th hoping to see a broken man move towards the tee. He may yet see a man full of control and purpose striding after him. A man with a mission. Stephen Smith is a chartered psychologist specialising in personalities in sport.

Hoddle is next England chief

Martin Thorpe. GLENN HODDLE has been offered the job of England manager by the Football Association and is expected to sign in the next 36 hours. The FA spoke to the Chelsea manager on Monday and his appointment is a formality. He will take up the national reins after the European Championship on July 1, giving him two months to prepare a team and scout opposition prior to England's first qualifier in Moldova on September 1 for the 1998 World Cup.

Brighton agree Goldstone deal

Robert Pryce. BRIGHTON will be staying at the Goldstone ground for another year after agreeing a deal with their landlord just before yesterday's deadline. Greg Stanley, their co-owner, refused to disclose the cost of the deal, prompting suggestions that they must have agreed to pay close to the full £480,000 demanded by Chartwell Land. Brighton supporters were happy that the threat of a move to Portsmouth had been removed, but their joy was not unclouded. David Bellotti, the chief executive and deputy chairman, had to call on police help when he was prevented from driving away from the Goldstone. Stanley met Liam Brady, the head of a consortium of potential investors, yesterday afternoon. Yet according to Bill Archer, the club chairman, "the club is not for sale". "Archer must be made to relinquish his shareholding," said John Baine, founder member of the Brighton Independent Supporters' Association. "Fans of the club have no confidence in Archer, some confidence in Greg Stanley and total confidence in Liam Brady". Archer, Stanley and Bellotti, the men responsible for selling the ground before an alternative was available, breaking the board's 1993 undertaking to have council, remains in charge after removing four non-executive directors without notice last week. "The first we knew of it," said Dudley Sizen, "was when we read the programme on Saturday". Bellotti's version — that directors were "exercising their opportunity to leave the board with a refund of their investment" — is disputed by the men themselves. "There are three things I would like to point out," said the former vice-chairman John Campbell. "We were removed from the board; we didn't resign. It wasn't an investment; it was an interest-free loan. And they haven't paid any of it back yet."

One-game ban for Asprilla

Russell Thomas. THE FA yesterday chose to let Faustino Asprilla in the pocket rather than damage Newcastle's title challenge next season. The £7.5 million Colombian was fined £10,000 and banned for only one game — next season's opener — after being found guilty of two misconduct charges arising from the elbowing and hitting incidents involving Manchester City's Keith Curle. Asprilla's hearing, attended by Kevin Keegan and five other Newcastle representatives, before an FA commission in a hotel near Leeds lasted almost four hours. Curle, facing one charge for alleged "aggressive manner", was cleared after 45 minutes. Given fears that Asprilla might be handed a six-game ban, the Colombian and Newcastle appear to have escaped lightly. Nevertheless his fine equals the highest imposed for an on-field incident. Eric Cantona's for his kung-fu kick at Crystal Palace in January last year. Both incidents in the February 24 match at Maine Road went unpunished by the referee Martin Bodenham but the elbowing charge was clearly considered by the commission, chaired by Lincoln's chairman John Reames, as the more serious and it prompted legal argument. Later the FA spokesman Gary Double said: "The commission decided the player was guilty of misconduct on both charges... on the second (hitting) it was decided no penalty would be imposed. On the first (elbowing) the commission ruled Asprilla would pay part of the cost of the hearing, serve a one-match ban at the start of next season and be fined £10,000. Newcastle's solicitor Stephen Horneby questioned the commission's right to view video evidence. But after the FA's top lawyer Raj Parker outlined its case, this challenge was rejected. A video of the elbowing incident was screened three times. Asprilla, Keegan refused to comment. "Bristol Rovers are going home" after 10 years' exile in Bath. They will share Bristol's rugby union ground next season.

First Division: Oldham 2, Stoke City 0

Ken Ross. OLDHAM last night secured the victory which finally banishes the threat of relegation from the First Division. Stoke may stay with them, as they will start Sunday's final game against Southend at the Victoria Ground still not certain of a place in the play-offs. Oldham won at a canter, making some recent dismal performances all the more mystifying. Although they have tumbled far and without grace since the Premiership and FA Cup semi-finals they are still capable of tidy football, even if their best intentions are too often submerged beneath apprehension. Last night they began frantically and then accelerated in a bid to sweep Stoke away. Oldham's season-long problem has been scoring, so the omission of Barlow and McCarthy was surprising. Still, the manager, Graeme Sharp, could hardly be accused of not knowing a good striker when he sees one: or a bad one. Stoke's luck held for longer than it should have done. Rickers hit the bar early on but the breakthrough was

Oldham are safe

only delayed. After 26 minutes Whittle's foolishly outstretched leg sent Beckford crashing. "Penalty," screamed the soaked and bedraggled referee. The ball, Richardson's conversion was more subtle than Whittle's tackle had been. Seemingly fatigued and certainly listless, Stoke could barely construct a meaningful response although Oldham's limping goalkeeper Northwood was required to touch a Glasgow header over the bar as the game lurched towards its midway point. As the rain cascaded down the evening surrendered its rhythm, paving the way for the less cultured feet to strike up the only meaningful beat. It was neither pretty nor entertaining, but it was too much at stake for niceties. Oldham deservedly doubled their advantage with 18 minutes remaining when Gerry Creaney cleverly steered in Richardson's low cross from the right. Oldham scorers: Halliwell, Mann, Fleming, Graham, Redmond, Sarrin, Rickers, Richardson, Beckford, Orpington, Creaney. Stoke City scorers: Clarkson (Carstairs 75min), Sigurdsson, Whittle, Sandford, Hedwin, Wallace, Gieghon, Pott, Strudwick, Swann. Referee: K. Leach (Wolverhampton).

Sport in brief

Table with 2 columns: Sport, Details. Includes Rugby Union, Athletics, and other sports news.

Results

Table with 2 columns: Soccer, Tennis, Basketball, etc. Lists scores and winners for various matches.

Fixtures

Table with 2 columns: Soccer, Basketball, etc. Lists upcoming matches and dates.

Teamtalk

The Independent News and Reports Service. Call 0891 33 77+. Includes sports news and commentary.

Advertisement for Teamtalk, providing contact information for the news service.

Advertisement for a sports event, likely related to the horse racing mentioned in the text.

Advertisement for a horse racing event, listing various races and participants.

Advertisement for a horse racing event, listing various races and participants.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring the text 'Carry on Doctor' and 'Back starts'.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom center of the page.

Cricket

Benson & Hedges Cup: Kent v Middlesex

Carry on Doctor

Paul Weaver at Canterbury
DR JULIAN THOMPSON is only 37 and has played only four first-class matches...

They lost this game by six wickets with 18 balls to spare. John Emburey is badly missed but their batting has been their real sorrow...



Look back in anger... Middlesex's Brown falls victim to the pace of McCague for 43

Derbyshire v Lancashire

Cork right on the nose

DAVID HOPPS at Chesterfield
DOMINIC CORK at his most ebullient provided reassuring proof yesterday that he is one England player quickly casting aside his World Cup depression...

Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire

Hick starts suicide slide

Mike Selvey at Trent Bridge
DESPITE the flurry of strokes from the Nottinghamshire captain Paul Johnson that finally carried his side to a five-wicket win over Worcestershire...

Three overs on from that, Curtis, who had begun the innings in the grandest possible style by driving the first two deliveries of the match back past the bowler David Penrett...

Glamorgan v Somerset

Turner scales new height

David Foot at Cardiff
MATTHEW MAYNARD and Adrian Dale were looking increasingly in charge when the rain finally curtailed play yesterday with Glamorgan 108 for two after 27 overs in reply to Somerset's 239 for eight...

stand at the crease, academically tall as he is a Cardiff man, seemingly bereft of strokes though never to be discounted in a crisis...

Glamorgan v Somerset

Turner scales new height

stand at the crease, academically tall as he is a Cardiff man, seemingly bereft of strokes though never to be discounted in a crisis...

Glamorgan's bowling was as varied as the climate. Dale bowled three wickets in an over and then had Harden playing on, Thomas, small and nippy, twice beat Bowler in an early over but his suspect accuracy was never far away...

Derbyshire v Lancashire

Cunliffe comes of age

THE grizzled Graham Gooch became the first player to score 6,000 runs in the Benson and Hedges Cup with a 100 off 104 balls yesterday against the British Universities at Chelmsford...

Queen's Park with the sparsely risen is a customary haven for seam bowlers, and Cork, who habitually torments Lancashire in this competition, performed like a man overcooking on oxygen...

Hockey

Double series triumph lifts Britain's Olympic women

Pat Rowley
GREAT BRITAIN'S women claimed their second Pre-Games Test series in Atlanta yesterday with a 3-2 victory over Spain...

put away down the left wing by Mandy Davies, she took on the defence and scored with a remarkable reverse-stick sweep shot...

Table Tennis

England lose and win bronze

Richard Jago in Bratislava
ENGLAND'S women lost 4-0 to Hungary yesterday but still took a European Championships bronze medal...

Table Tennis

England lose and win bronze

hit took a net cord and jumped off. Elio's 21-15, 21-18, 21-18 and 21-15 to convince England all was lost...

Table Tennis

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Scoreboard

Table with columns for match details, scores, and player statistics. Includes sections for Benson and Hedges Cup, Kent v Middlesex, and other matches.

Scoreboard

Table with columns for match details, scores, and player statistics. Includes sections for Glamorgan v Somerset, Derbyshire v Lancashire, and other matches.

Scoreboard

Table with columns for match details, scores, and player statistics. Includes sections for Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire, Derbyshire v Lancashire, and other matches.

Scoreboard

Table with columns for match details, scores, and player statistics. Includes sections for Derbyshire v Lancashire, Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire, and other matches.

NotWest Interest rates advertisement. Includes a table of interest rates for various savings products and a NatWest logo at the bottom.

**SOCCER: Taking the strain with Kevin Keegan, page 14**

**CRICKET: Cork the destroyer bounces back, page 15**

# SportsGuardian

**BUSINESS AS USUAL AFTER SNOOKER'S ENFANT TERRIBLE ESCAPES WITH A FINE**

## O'Sullivan runs into trouble at the table

**Clive Everton sees a lucky man contest the quarter-finals**

**R**ONNIE O'Sullivan, the luckiest man in the tournament, strode into the Crucible Theatre spotlight here yesterday and soon encountered difficulties against John Higgins in the quarter-finals of the Embassy World Championship.

By the evening it looked as if O'Sullivan — less ebullient than usual but not noticeably short of confidence — might lose. But even if he does, his £30,000 prize-money will cover the punishment imposed on him by the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association for assaulting its assistant press officer Michael Ganley on Sunday.

Whatever went on late into Monday night behind the closed doors of the disciplinary hearing seemed yesterday not to have affected O'Sullivan. Although he received a muted reception, the 30-year-old from Stourbridge quickly took a 3-1 lead, apparently unfazed by his narrow escape from disqualification.

Higgins, however, hit back in their best-of-25-frames match to go 3-3 ahead against a player fortunate to escape with a £20,000 fine after admitting he had attacked Gan-

ley. The mood in the building was in sombre contrast to the atmosphere as Monday night's verdict was reached after a four-hour meeting.

At a midnight press conference the association announced the fine — a record, £3,000 higher than the one imposed on Alex Higgins for "serial offending" — but even after O'Sullivan has made an additional "voluntary" contribution of £10,000 to two charities, his outgoings will be matched by his prize-money even if Higgins beats him.

The financial penalty reflects the severity of the assault, and it was valid for O'Sullivan to claim in his public apology that it was "out of character", but the feeling among the circuit's insiders was that the disciplinary committee had been too lenient.

An exception was John Virgo, who condemned the offence but said there was "a time for forgiveness". But the fine and a two-year suspension from the game — itself suspended for two years — might be seen as too much forgiveness too soon.

O'Sullivan's manager Barry Hearn, making a rare appearance at a snooker tournament, commented with some justification: "Our lawyers did a good job."

What was said to the disciplinary hearing has yet to leak out but the WPSBA's



Ready to go... O'Sullivan waits in the wings yesterday, the morning after a long night before PHOTOGRAF: MICHAEL STEELE

much maligned constitution and disciplinary code, picked over in previous cases more voraciously than a Christmas turkey, may well have been gnawed again.

The recent abolition of a seven-day cooling-off period after an alleged offence was well intended, but perversely it made more difficult Higgins's preparations for arguably the

most important match of a career that has already yielded five major titles.

Only 11 hours before he was due to play his first World quarter-final, his psychological focus was blurred by the possibility that he might advance to the semi-finals by default — a prospect which he was honest enough to admit would not appal him.

Hearn said: "I always felt common sense would prevail. The punishment is hard but fair. Alex Higgins would not have been world champion if he had conformed, but I hope Ronnie tempers his temper."

High-profile players who lead vivid off-table lives usually command more media attention and sell more tickets than the model professional that Higgins is and that O'Sullivan — according to what he said in his apology — aspires to become.

Jimmy White has a racy off-table life without a hint of violent conduct, and young players would do well to

match his perfect table manners and his in-play comments.

Nobody wants to stifle O'Sullivan's virtuosity and showmanship, but Sunday's assault, his recent accumulation of petty behaviour, and a punishment less severe than many of his professional peers feel others might have received have depleted the goodwill once felt towards him.

If he or Higgins is to be the one to succeed Stephen Hendry as the youngest champion, the widespread feeling is that Higgins is the more worthy.

## Lawnmower powers into pole position



Vincent Hanna

**F**OR some time I wanted to vent my spleen about Formula One racing but I lacked the special, feed hands-on experience. Things have changed.

Every April when things go missing, like the barbecue or small children, I notice that the grass is long. I drag out the lawnmower and take it to the lawnmower hospital, where they say there's a long queue and come back in July.

So Hugo's friend Rod comes round and cuts the grass. Yesterday he brought a gleaming red monster with rotating blades and a seat. For a tanner he allowed me to drive it while he drank my beer under the oak tree.

I was damn good. Apart from the incident when the conservatory backed into me, I turned in three hours of nerveless cornering — and edging.

I know now what the Schumachers go through. Don't tell me about life-and-death struggles with finely tuned machines. I have earned the right to say F1 racing is a waste of time.

Not for sporting journalists, mind you. We drift about in a glamorous *demimonde* behind wire fences, where cigarette manufacturers dispense reassurance, and men in tight suits with crooked smiles and a hint of danger pour champagne for blonde women with stop-watches. I've done it. I had a great time.

But it's nothing to do with sport. Formula One is a contest for organisers of technology. A parade of mobile computers. There is excitement at the track — with the noise, the smell, and the collective frenzy of the fans. But it is spectacle, not sport.

Well, that's what I think. Let me offer you three paradoxes. The first is about television.

Motor racing was popularised on TV in the 1970s by Jonathan Martin of the BBC, who was obsessed with Niki Lauda. He also got worked up, I recall, about Arnie and Virginia Wade. Anyway, in those days the "home" network paid for televising its own grand prix and the rest of Eurovision got it for peanuts.

So the cigarette makers, who had been hit by the 1965

ban on TV adverts, cashed in on the soaring viewing figures that Jonathan served up with the aid of Jackie Stewart, James Hunt and Murray Walker. Now they pay through the nose.

Any serious F1 team needs annual sponsorship of £40 million. Sponsors get their names on the car in 16 appearances on TV. Some gear the money to the number of seconds their car is actually seen.

The paradox is that F1 racing collects twice for the same thing. The sponsors fork out to see their labels flash by on TV at 150mph. Then television has to pay up to provide the medium for the message. If it didn't, the sport would wither.

Paradox Two is about car design. Schumacher's performance at the Nürburgring was brilliant, pushing himself into second place whereas his team-mate Eddie Irvine hardly got off the grid. But his car was not only 8mph slower than the Williams, its design made close-quarter manoeuvring difficult.

At the Ferrari pushed into Villeneuve's slipstream it became aerodynamically compromised, and less efficient. So the better Schumacher drove, the less he looked like passing. He needed a mistake from the Canadian, who did not oblige.

Once, motor racing was organised so that driving skills ranked equal to or higher than technological achievement. Have another look at the 1966 Frankheimer film *Grand Prix* and you'll see what I mean. Now they are one factor in a complicated equation and most argue that, although things are better than in 1962, driving skills are not the decisive factor.

**P**ARADOX Three is about circuits. Most of the current grand prix tracks are designed less for contests of driving skill than for processions. Critics cite Imola, venue of the San Marino GP, where a classic combination of fast bend/long straight/slow turn, a test of nerve and engine power, has been eliminated after the deaths of Senna and Ratzberger.

Yet my colleague Alan Henry argues that you can still provide marvellous — and safe — racing. "Look how it used to be in Buenos Aires before they revamped it into a bland circuit."

I hear that the sport's governing body FIA is rethinking the whole boring business. I can provide experimental facilities on my back lawn, on Sundays, every fortnight. I'll even let them drive — for a tanner.



### Ebdon in record ripping form

**A**VIOLENT miscos on a frame-ball red by Peter Ebdon made possibly the worst rip of a cloth in tournament history and caused his quarter-final to be adjourned for the day with him leading Steve Davis 5-1, writes Clive Everton.

Running repairs after Ebdon had eventually taken the frame to lead 3-1 enabled him to make his fourth clearance of the tournament, 137, before a new cloth was deemed essential.

The champion Stephen Hendry came back from 1-3 to take a 5-3 overnight lead over Darren Morgan.

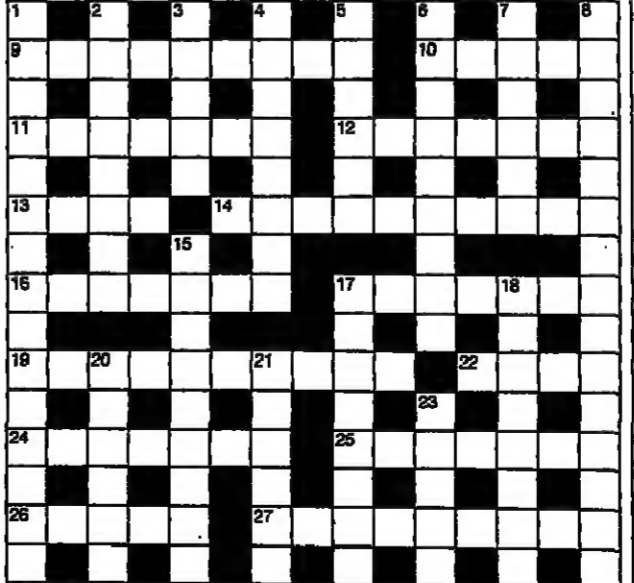
match his perfect table manners and his in-play comments.

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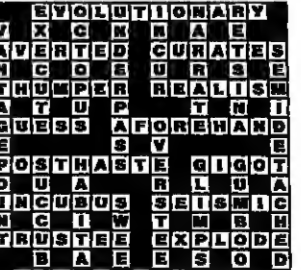
If he or Higgins is to be the one to succeed Stephen Hendry as the youngest champion, the widespread feeling is that Higgins is the more worthy.

### Guardian Crossword No 20,641

Set by Araucaria



- Across**
- 9 Beheaded Scots king on icon destroyed as against church law (9)
  - 10 Take one writer and get less Green? (5)
  - 11 Beauty who provides weapons for church? (7)
  - 12 Beauty who should be dipped? (7)
  - 13,22 Signs of love and peace are our ptegen (4-4)
  - 14 Meaty drink folled a Sioux plot (6,4)
  - 16 Flying shoes give fever a fresh start (7)
  - 17 Fire, inversely the beauty queen of hell? (7)
  - 19 Blot out number on list — it's beautiful (10)
  - 22 See 13
  - 24 Composer gives short story new ending (7)
  - 25 Copper's accepting Indian
- Down**
- 1 Having beauty, I could turn up his letters (15)
  - 2 Feeble-sounding old queen left (for dead?) by senior common room (8)
  - 3 Saying what will go in the garden? (5)
  - 4 A mineral deposit at Aachen turning up to give eating problems (8)
  - 5 Top class performer raised assistance for cloth (6)
  - 6 High table, as it were, makes captured ship heel over (5,4)
  - 7 A beauty with a head for love (6)
  - 8 Stewed prune gets police



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,640

- forces to raise voices without beauty (15)
- 15 Tell the police about some celebrities having no beauty (8)
- 17 Tact finds beauty in food (8)
- 18 Being equally pressured is nothing with a crib available (8)
- 20 Volley exchanged with beauty (8)
- 21 Beauty causes trouble and rising wickedness (6)
- 23 Beauty and the beast that's little outside home (3-2)

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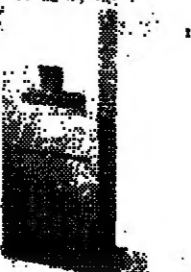
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**There are similarities between the themes and the issues of the Scott play, Half The Picture, which caught the imagination of a theatre audience. Indeed, we have drawn attention to this by using the same actors.**

Richard Norton-Taylor

**G2 page 7**

Want to have fun? Join the Major...  
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 Photo back...  
 Major...  
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 Inside...

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.